ISLAMIC HISTORY SERIES **PART II**

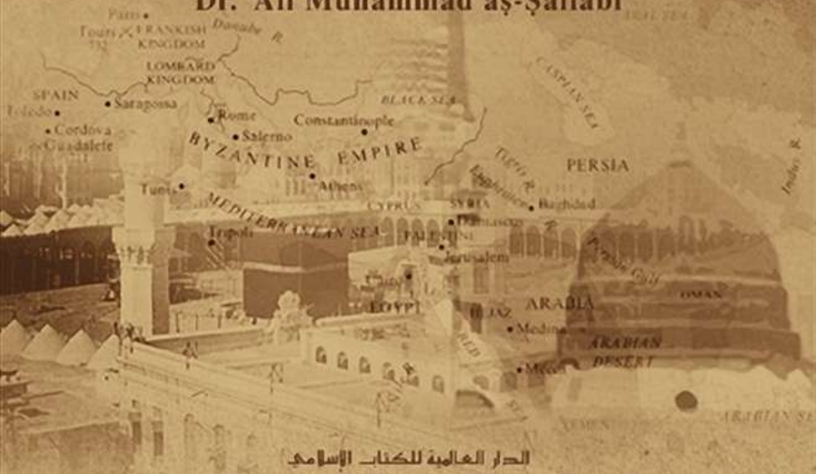
THE RIGHTLY GUIDED CALIPHS **2**

‘UMAR IBN AL-KHATTÂB
HIS LIFE & TIMES

عمر بن الخطاب (رضي الله عنه) شخصيته وعصره

Vol. 2

Dr. ‘Ali Muhammad aṣ-Ṣallâbi



الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHING HOUSE

Islamic History —
The Rightly Guided Caliphs (2)

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb

His Life and Times

VOLUME TWO

عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه

شخصيته و عصره

Dr. 'Ali Muhammad as-Sallabi

Translated by
Nasiruddin al-Khattab

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHING HOUSE

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( ) : *Subḥânahu wa Ta'âla* — "The Exalted"

(ﷺ) : *Ṣalla-Allâhu 'Alayhi wa Sallam* — "Blessings and peace be upon him"

( ) : *'Alayhis-Salâm* — "May peace be upon him"

( ) : *Raḍia-Allâhu 'Anhu* — "May Allah be pleased with him"

( ) : *Raḍia-Allâhu 'Anha* — "May Allah be pleased with her"

Transliteration Chart

ا	a
آ . ى	â
ب	b
ت	t
ة	h or t (when followed by another Arabic word)
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ

ظ	dh
ع	‘
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
هـ - ه - ـه	h
و	w
و (as a long vowel)	oo
ي	y
ي (as a long vowel)	ee
ء	’ (Omitted in initial position)

َ	Fatḥah	a
ِ	Kasrah	i
ُ	Ḍammah	u
ّ	Shaddah	Double letter
ْ	Sukoon	Absence of vowel

CHAPTER FIVE
The Fiqh of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb in Dealing with the Governors

When the Islamic state expanded during the caliphate of 'Umar, he divided the state into large administrative sections in order to make it easier to rule it and to supervise its income. The conquests were a primary reason for 'Umar's development of the state's institutions, including that of governorship.

1. The Regions of the State

The division of the state into provinces is in some ways a continuation of the division into provinces at the time of Abu Bakr, with some changes in the governorship posts in many cases. There follows a brief look at these provinces.

1.1. Makkah al-Mukarramah

During the period of 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), the governorship of Makkah was held by Muḥraz ibn Ḥârithah ibn Rabee'ah ibn 'Abd Shams. Then Qunqudh ibn 'Umayr ibn Jad'ân at-Tameemi became 'Umar's governor in Makkah, and his case is like those who came before him; there are no reports of how long he was governor or of any events that occurred during his governorship. After him, Nâfi' ibn al-Ḥârith al-

Khuzâ'i became 'Umar's governor in Makkah. When 'Umar died, Nâfi' was the governor of Makkah. The sources mention some events that took place during his governorship, such as his buying the house of Safwân ibn Umayyah with the purpose of turning it into a prison; that was narrated by Bukhari.[1]

It is also narrated that Nâfi' met 'Umar in 'Usfân when he came for Ḥajj. 'Umar asked him: "Whom have you appointed over the valley (meaning Makkah)?" Nâfi' said, "Ibn Abza." He asked, "Who is Ibn Abza?" He said, "One of our freed slaves." He then asked, "Have you appointed a freed slave over them?" He said, "He is well versed in the Book of Allah and has knowledge of the laws of inheritance." 'Umar said, "Your Prophet said, 'Allah raises some in status by this Book and lowers others.' "[2]

During 'Umar's reign, the most prominent development in this province was the expansion of the *Ḥaram*, when 'Umar bought some houses that were next to the *Ḥaram* and ordered that they be demolished and the land incorporated into the sanctuary of the Mosque, around which he built a low wall. Makkah was the place where governors from all parts of the Muslim world met with the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb during the Ḥajj season, so Makkah played a major role as one of the most important provinces in the Islamic state at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ).

1.2. Al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah

The caliph was regarded as the primary governor of Madeenah, because he lived there and so he was running its affairs.

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[1] Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Khuṣoomât*, 3/25; *Bâb ar-Rabṭ wa al-Ḥabs*, *Musnad Aḥmad*, no. 232; *al-Mawsoo'ah al-Ḥadeethiyah*, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[2] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân* by 'Abdul-'Azeez al-'Umari, 1/67. This is the

When the caliph 'Umar was absent from Madeenah, he would appoint someone to take his place in running its affairs. Sometimes 'Umar would appoint Zayd ibn Thâbit (ﷺ) to look after Madeenah when he travelled or went for Ḥajj.[3] 'Umar also appointed 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib in charge of Madeenah during his absence on several occasions.[4] Thus 'Umar followed the same policy as the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr, of appointing someone in charge of Madeenah during his absence. The governorship of Madeenah held a particular importance in those days for a number of reasons, chief of which was that it was the seat of the caliph 'Umar, the source of commands and instructions that went out to the various Muslim regions, and the starting point from which the *mujâhid* armies set out. In addition to that, it was the home of many of the *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them) whom 'Umar prevented from spreading out to other regions.[5] Hence many seekers of knowledge came to it, wanting to learn the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) and fiqh from the lips of the *Ṣaḥâbah* themselves (may Allah be pleased with them).[6]

1.3. Aṭ-Ṭâ'if

Aṭ-Ṭâ'if is regarded as one of the most important Islamic cities at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ). It supplied tough fighters for the jihad movement. Its governor from the time of the Messenger (ﷺ) was 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ, whom Abu Bakr left in place. His

=most important references on this topic. I have undertaken a summary of this book.

[3] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/68.

[4] *Târeekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/147.

[5] Ibid, 1/157.

[6] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/68.

governorship of aṭ-Ṭâ'if continued for two years of 'Umar's caliphate, but 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ longed to go for jihad. He wrote to 'Umar asking him for permission to go and fight, and 'Umar said to him: "As for me, I will not dismiss you; rather appoint whomever you want (to act as governor in your absence)." So he appointed a man from aṭ-Ṭâ'if to take his place.

'Umar appointed 'Uthmân as governor of Oman and Baḥrain[7], and it is narrated that when he died, 'Umar appointed Sufiyân ibn 'Abdullâh ath-Thaqafi[8] as governor of aṭ-Ṭâ'if. He and 'Umar exchanged letters about taking zakah on vegetables and fruits or honey.[9] All of that indicates that there was a great deal of agricultural activity in aṭ-Ṭâ'if at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ). The city of aṭ-Ṭâ'if and its environs continued to enjoy stability at the time of 'Umar. It was a resort for the people of Makkah who used to go there during the summer.[10] Aṭ-Ṭâ'if is regarded as one of the major cities of the Islamic state at the time of 'Umar.[11]

1.4. Yemen

When 'Umar became caliph, Yemen was enjoying stability and its affairs were taken care of by means of governors throughout the region. 'Umar approved of the governors whom Abu Bakr had appointed over Yemen.[12]

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[7] *Târeekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyâṭ*, p. 134.

[8] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/239.

[9] *Aṭ-Ṭâ'if fee al-'Aṣr al-Jâhili wa Ṣadr al-Islâm*, by Nâdia Ḥusayn Ṣaqr, p. 19.

[10] Ibid.

[11] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/69.

[12] *Ghâyat al-Amâni fee Akhbâr al-Qaṭr al-Yamâni*, by Yaḥya ibn al-Ḥusayn, 1/83.

Ya'la ibn Umayyah was one of Abu Bakr's governors in Yemen, and he became famous during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. The historians state that he was subsequently appointed as 'Umar's governor in Yemen and he was famous for that until 'Umar died.[13] Many sources describe events which happened to the governor of Yemen (Ya'la ibn Umayyah) and some of the people of Yemen, as well as mentioning some cases of complaints that they made against Ya'la to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, which necessitated his summoning Ya'la to Madeenah on several occasions to investigate these matters.[14] When Ya'la was absent 'Umar would sometimes appoint someone else to take his place. 'Umar and Ya'la also exchanged letters about some matters of zakah.[15] Ya'la himself also mentioned that he was one of the governors from whom 'Umar took half of their wealth at the end of his caliphate.[16]

Another of 'Umar's governors in Yemen was 'Abdullâh ibn Abi Rabee'ah al-Makhzoomi, who was appointed over a limited area of Yemen, namely al-Janad, as was stated by aṭ-Ṭabari when he listed him as one of 'Umar's governors at the time of his death. He is mentioned as 'Umar's governor of al-Janad alongside Ya'la who is described as the governor of Yemen.[17]

The people of Yemen played a major role in the conquests at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ). They participated in the conquests of Syria, Iraq and Egypt.[18] When the new Islamic cities in Iraq, such as Baṣra and Koofah, were laid out, many Yemeni tribes settled there, foremost among whom was Kindah who settled in

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[13] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 2/157.

[14] *Ghâyat al-Amâni*. 1/83.

[15] *Al-Amwâl* by al-Qâsim ibn Salâm, p. 436.

[16] *Târeekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/157.

[17] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/239.

[18] *Al-Wilâyah fee al-Buldân*, 1/71.

Koofah.[19] A number of other Yemeni tribes settled in Syria, where they played a major role in the conquests. And a number of them settled in Egypt after the founding of al-Fusṭâṭ.[20]

Undoubtedly these organized migrations of Yemeni tribes at the time of 'Umar were planned, and the governors of Yemen played a major role in that planning and in distributing the tribes among the various regions. Hence Yemen was one of the most important Islamic provinces at the time of 'Umar, and its role and influence in various other provinces are quite clear.[21]

1.5. Baḥrain

When 'Umar became caliph al-'Alâ' ibn al-Ḥaḍrami was governor of Baḥrain, and at the beginning of his caliphate, 'Umar approved him as governor, until 14 A.H. according to the soundest opinion.[22]

Al-'Alâ' took part in the early stages of the jihad in Persia, where he played a major role. Towards the end of al-'Alâ's governorship in Baḥrain, 'Umar issued a decree dismissing al-'Alâ' from the post of governor, and appointing him as governor of Baṣra. Al-'Alâ' was not happy about that, but he died before he reached Baṣra and was buried in Baḥrain. It was said that the reason for his dismissal was that he went to fight the Persians by sea without 'Umar's permission, and 'Umar did not like to send the Muslims by sea. After al-'Alâ' died, 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ was appointed as governor of Baḥrain, and he started to wage jihad in the neighbouring

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[19] *Al-Yemen fee Dhill al-Islâm*, by Dr. 'Iṣâm ad-Deen, p. 49.

[20] *Futooḥ Miṣr wa Akhbâruhâ* by Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam, Pp. 119-123.

[21] *Al-Wilâyât 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/71.

[22] Ibid, 1/75.

areas of Persia, until his conquests reached as far as al-Sind. 'Umar issued orders to 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ telling him to cooperate with the governor of Baṣra, Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, in his conquests, so their armies began to cooperate in attacking Persia via Baṣra.[23]

'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ was well known for his piety and his strict avoidance of *ḥarâm* things. 'Uthmân was appointed as 'Umar's governor of Baḥrain at least twice. He was appointed for the first time in 15 A.H., then he was needed to lead the army near Baṣra, so 'Ayyâsh ibn Abi Thawr[24] was appointed as governor of Baḥrain after 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ. It seems that his time as governor was not long. Then 'Umar appointed Qudâmah ibn Madh'oon as governor of Baḥrain, who was accompanied by Abu Hurayrah, who was appointed as a judge in Baḥrain as well as being given some other duties. During Qudâmah's governorship of Baḥrain, he was praised by the people, but at the end of his governorship he was accused of drinking alcohol. After the matter was investigated, the accusation was proven to be true, so 'Umar carried out the *ḥadd* punishment on him. 'Uthmân ibn Madh'oon was the maternal uncle of 'Umar's children 'Abdullâh and Ḥafṣah, and 'Uthmân got angry with 'Umar but 'Umar tried to reconcile with him, and he used to say: "I saw in a dream that someone came to me and said, 'Go and reconcile with Qudâmah, for he is your brother.'" And it was said that his dismissal of Qudâmah from the post of governor of Baḥrain took place in 20 A.H. After that, the well-known *Ṣaḥâbi* Abu Hurayrah (ﷺ) was appointed as governor of Baḥrain. He had undertaken some other duties in Baḥrain during the governorship of Qudâmah ibn Madh'oon, and he was one of the witnesses who had testified against Qudâmah regarding his drinking. 'Umar issued a decree appointing

[23] Op. cit., 1/73.

[24] Ibid.

Abu Hurayrah as governor of Baḥrain after he dismissed Qudâmah.[25] After that, 'Umar appointed 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ ath-Thaqafi as governor of Baḥrain once again, and he remained its governor until 'Umar died.[26]

In many texts it is stated that the governorship of Oman was added to that of Baḥrain. Reports say that when 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ was appointed as governor, he was appointed as governor of Baḥrain and al-Yamâmah.[27] These reports give us a strong indication that Baḥrain had close ties to both Oman and al-Yamâmah, and that these two regions were considered to be part of the province of Baḥrain at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ). The geographical and human connections between these two regions and Baḥrain are quite obvious. The phrase "Baḥrain and surrounding areas" which is often used by the historians may be understood as referring to Oman and al-Yamâmah. Baḥrain was a principal source of *kharâj* and *jizyah*, which points to the prosperity of this province at that time. The Muslim tribes of Baḥrain and their rulers took part in the conquests of Persia and the east, and they played an important role in those conquests.[28]

1.6. Egypt

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ was the one who led the conquest of Egypt, as will be discussed in detail when we look at the conquests. 'Umar appointed him as governor of Egypt and he remained in that post until 'Umar died, despite his occasional differences with 'Umar

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[25] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/75.

[26] Ibid.

[27] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/239.

[28] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/76.

which led 'Umar to threaten to discipline him. 'Amr was the main governor of Egypt, but there were other minor governors in Egypt, such as 'Abdullâh ibn Abi as-Saraḥ, who was governor of as-Sa'eed (Upper Egypt) at the time of 'Umar's death.[29]

We may note that during the governorship of 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ in Egypt, 'Umar frequently intervened in many affairs of governorship.[30] 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ made use of the Egyptians' experience in matters of *kharâj* and *jizyah*, and he employed them in this work.[31] It is well known that 'Amr did not allow his troops to farm and become distracted by that, and he punished those who disobeyed him in that, acting on the commands of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb.[32] This naturally made the troops more devoted to matters of jihad, as they did not have time to get used to a life of ease and did not become attached to the land. The troops were allocated salaries from the *bayt al-mâl* which meant that they had no need for that.

With support from the caliph 'Umar, 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ was able to organize the affairs of Egypt within a few years and it took its place as a major Islamic province. A number of events took place there which indicate that it was a stable province despite the dangers which surrounded it, such as the ongoing attempts of the Byzantines to recapture it by attacking Alexandria from the sea.

This province was fertile ground for the spread of Islam at the time of the caliph 'Umar, because of the justice and mercy that became widespread, which its people had never seen before, in addition to their conviction of the truths of Islam. So they joined the ranks of Islam.

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[29] *Futooḥ Miṣr*, p. 173.

[30] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/79.

[31] *Futooḥ Miṣr wa Akhbâruhum*, p. 152.

[32] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/82.

Administrative matters in Egypt ran smoothly because when 'Amr was the governor he was also responsible for the *kharâj*, and this did not prevent 'Amr from asking other governors in areas under his control for help, as we have stated above. But the principal governor, who answered directly to the caliph throughout 'Umar's reign, was 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ. 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ benefited from the help of some of the local people in organizing the *kharâj* and other financial affairs.[33]

1.7. The provinces of Syria

When Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (ﷺ) died, the one who was responsible for the army and land of Syria was Khâlid ibn al-Waleed (ﷺ). When 'Umar became caliph, he issued a decree dismissing Khâlid ibn al-Waleed from the governorship of Syria and appointing Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ in his stead, to be in-charge of all the governors of Syria and to govern the Muslim community there.[34] When Abu 'Ubaydah was appointed governor of Syria, he started to organize its affairs and he appointed agents to act on his behalf in various regions of Syria. He began to reorganize its affairs as there were already agents in some regions, some of whom Abu 'Ubaydah approved of and others he dismissed. Khaleefah ibn Khayyâṭ says: "When Abu 'Ubaydah conquered Syria he appointed Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân over Palestine and its environs, Sharaḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah over Jordan, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed over Damascus, and Ḥabeeb ibn Muslimah over Homs, then he dismissed him and appointed 'Abdullâh ibn Qarṭ ath-Thamâli[35], then he dismissed him and

[33] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/83.

[34] *Tahdheeb Târeekh Dimashq*, 1/152.

[35] Al-Azdi: He was a Companion of the Prophet and it is reported that he took part in the conquest of Syria.

appointed 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit, then he dismissed him and reinstated 'Abdullâh ibn Qarṭ.[36]

Sometimes he would send some of his companions to govern certain areas of Syria for a specific length of time, such as when Abu 'Ubaydah sent Mu'âdh ibn Jabal to govern Jordan[37], or when he appointed people in his stead when he went out for jihad. He appointed Sa'eed ibn Zayd ibn 'Umar ibn Nufayl[38] in charge of Damascus when he went out to *Bayt al-Maqdis* (Jerusalem). Throughout his governorship of Syria Abu 'Ubaydah (may Allah have mercy on him) was an example of a righteous and pious man whose example was followed by his fellow governors and by the common folk. He was martyred, as we have mentioned above, in the plague of 'Amwâs, then Mu'âdh was appointed as governor after him, but he was martyred a few days later. When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) came to know of the deaths of Abu 'Ubaydah and Mu'âdh, he appointed Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân (ﷺ) as leader of the Muslim troops in Syria and he sent other different commanders to different parts of Syria. Yazeed was experienced in leading armies, and had been at the head of one of the armies that Abu Bakr had sent to conquer Syria. Abu 'Ubaydah also appointed him as his deputy in charge of Damascus on a number of occasions when he went out on campaigns.[39] The historians state that when 'Umar appointed Yazeed in charge of the armies of Syria, he appointed other commanders and distributed them throughout the various regions, and he put Yazeed in charge of Palestine and Jordan.[40] Yazeed's period as governor in Syria was short, hence there is little mention of him in the historical

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[36] *Târeekh Khaleefah*, p. 155.

[37] *Futooḥ ash-Shâm*, p. 248.

[38] *Al-Futooḥ*, Ibn A'tham al-Koofi, p. 289; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/90.

[39] *Futooḥ al-Buldân*, p. 137.

[40] Ibid, Pp. 145, 146.

sources. Yazeed died in 18 A.H. Just before his death he appointed his brother Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân to his position, and he wrote to 'Umar informing him of that. Yazeed's period of governorship was approximately one year.[41]

'Umar (ﷺ) approved of Mu'âwiyah as governor and he made some adjustments in the running of Syria's affairs after the death of Yazeed. He limited Mu'âwiyah's authority to the garrison of Damascus and collecting its *kharâj*; he put limits on Mu'âwiyah's authority with regard to the judiciary and prayer, when he sent two other Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) whom he put in charge of the judiciary and of prayer.[42] This was a limitation of Mu'âwiyah's authority, especially since the prayer was delegated to someone else, although usually the leader also led the prayers. Perhaps there were reasons why 'Umar adopted this new policy which began to appear in other regions where he took the same approach as he did with Mu'âwiyah. Mu'âwiyah was well known for his forbearance and generosity which made some groups of people come from Iraq and elsewhere to live in his province.[43] 'Umar appointed some agents in Syria, whom he put under the authority of Mu'âwiyah. During Mu'âwiyah's governorship of Syria, he undertook some campaigns against the Byzantines in the north of Syria; these were known as *aṣ-Ṣawâ'if* (the summer campaigns).[44]

Mu'âwiyah continued as the governor of Syria for the remainder of 'Umar's caliphate. There were other governors in some regions of Syria who were in direct contact with the caliph in Madeenah, but Mu'âwiyah is regarded as the most famous of them,

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[41] *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Aṣr an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 493.

[42] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/92.

[43] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/239.

[44] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/92.

as he was the governor of al-Balqa', Jordan, Palestine, Antioch, Qalqeeliyah, Ma'arrah al-Masarreen and other cities of Syria.[45] Some historians describe him as the governor of Syria whilst others are more circumspect, describing him as 'Umar's governor over part of Syria. Some of them state that before 'Umar died, he gave Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân authority over all of Syria.[46] It must be noted that there were ongoing changes in all provinces, based on changing military circumstances and the circumstances of the state in general in those days. Jordan was sometimes a separate province and was sometimes joined to other regions; sometimes some regions would be taken from it and added to Syria or Palestine, and so on.[47]

1.8 Iraq and Persia

The conquests in Iraq began during the days of Abu Bakr. At first they were led by al-Muthanna ibn Hârithah ash-Shaybâni, until Khâlid ibn al-Waleed came to Iraq, then he was appointed as governor. When Abu Bakr ordered Khâlid to go to Syria, he reinstated al-Muthanna ibn Hârithah as governor. When 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb (ﷺ) became caliph, he dismissed al-Muthanna and appointed Abu 'Ubaydah ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi. Al-Muthanna was dismissed at the same time as Khâlid was dismissed, which astonished the people, but 'Umar said: "I did not dismiss them because of any wrong that they did; rather the people exaggerated about them and I feared that the people would depend on them."[48] Despite his dismissal, al-Muthanna was a sincere soldier who

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[45] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/93.

[46] *Târeekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyât*, 155; *Siyar I'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/88.

[47] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/102.

[48] Ibid, 1/108.

participated with Abu 'Ubayd in most of his battles and did well.[49]

After Abu 'Ubayd was martyred, al-Muthanna was reinstated as leader, then Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ was appointed as commander of the army in Iraq. The wounds that al-Muthanna had received on the day of al-Jasr got the better of him and he fell sick and died before Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ reached Iraq.[50] Baṣra had just started to appear on the stage of provincial events before the battle of al-Qâdisiyah, but the victory of al-Qâdisiyah and the fall of al-Madâ'in to the Muslims are regarded as the beginning of a new stage in Iraq, where the provinces took on a certain shape and their general features began to become clear, whether in Baṣrah and in Koofah and their surrounding towns and villages which were regarded as part of them, or in other, separate provinces in Persia.[51]

1.8.1. Baṣrah

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb sent Shurayḥ ibn 'Âmir, one of the tribe of Bani Sa'd ibn Bakr to the area of Baṣrah before it was founded, to support Quṭbah ibn Qatâdah. Then 'Umar appointed him as governor of Baṣra and its environs. He was killed in one of the battles.[52] Then 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb sent 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân to Baṣra with a troop of soldiers, and appointed him as governor thereof. That took place in 14 A.H., not in 16 A.H., as Ṣâliḥ Aḥmad al-'Ali said: "Some historians think that 'Utbah was sent in 16 A.H., after the battle of al-Qâdisiyah or Jaloola', but the overwhelming majority of historians say that he was sent in 14 A.H., which makes us think that that is more likely to be the case."[53]

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[49] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/28.

[50] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/111.

[51] Ibid, 1/113.

[52] *Târeekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyâṭ*, p. 155.

[53] *At-Tandheemât al-Ijtimâ'iyah wa al-Iqtiṣâdiyah fee al-Baṣra*, p. 36.

The appointment of 'Utbah as governor of Baṣra was an important stage in the founding of this province. His era was filled with many great works, such as his conquests of parts of Persia that lay near to him on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates.[54] 'Utbah asked 'Umar to relieve him of the duties of governor, but 'Umar refused to do so; that took place during the Hajj season, when 'Umar insisted that he go back to his post. 'Utbah departed but he died on the way back to Baṣra. When news of his death reached 'Umar, he said: "I killed him, were it not that his appointed time had come," and he spoke highly of him and praised him. His death occurred in 17 A.H.[55] Then al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah was appointed after him, and he was the first one to set up the records of Baṣra. He remained governor of Baṣra until 'Umar dismissed him in 17 A.H., after al-Mugheerah was accused of *zinâ*. 'Umar investigated the matter and proved al-Mugheerah's innocence, and he had the three witnesses flogged, but 'Umar dismissed al-Mugheerah so as to be on the safe side and to protect the public interest, but 'Umar appointed him as governor elsewhere after that.[56]

After the dismissal of al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, 'Umar appointed Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (ﷺ) as governor of Baṣra. Abu Moosa is regarded — and rightfully so — as the most famous governor of Baṣra during the days of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. Numerous places in Persia were conquered during his time. He used to engage in jihad himself and he sent commanders to many places in Baṣra. During his period, the troops of Baṣra managed to conquer al-Ahwâz and its environs, and they conquered a number of important places. The period of his governorship was filled with jihad.

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[54] *Târeekh Khaleefah ibn Khayyâṭ*, Pp. 127, 128.

[55] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/115.

[56] Ibid, 1/117.

Abu Moosa cooperated with the governors of neighbouring provinces in many wars and conquests. He undertook great efforts to organize the conquered regions and appointed agents to help secure them and organize their affairs.

There was a great deal of correspondence between Abu Moosa and 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb on numerous issues, such as 'Umar's advice to Abu Moosa on how to receive people in his *majlis*, and his advice to Abu Moosa to fear Allah and try to help the people. This was valuable advice, in which 'Umar said: "The happiest of people is the one under whose care people are happy because of him, and the most miserable of people is the one under whose care people are miserable because of him. Beware of indulging in worldly pleasures or allowing your agents to do so, lest you become like an animal that sees some vegetation and starts grazing it, aiming to get fat, buts its death is in its fat."[57]

There is also some correspondence between 'Umar and Abu Moosa which points to various administrative and executive issues which Abu Moosa undertook on 'Umar's instructions. Most of this correspondence has been compiled by Muhammad Ḥameedullâh in his valuable book on political documents.[58]

Abu Moosa's governorship of Baṣra is regarded as one of the best periods, as described by one of the descendents of the people of Baṣra, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri, who said: "No rider ever came to Baṣra who was better for its people than Abu Moosa."[59] In addition to being the governor of Baṣra, Abu Moosa was also the best teacher for its people; he taught them the Qur'an and taught them about their religion.[60]

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[57] *Manâqib 'Umar* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 130.

[58] *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah.*

[59] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 2/389.

[60] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/120.

During the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, many cities in Persia which were conquered at that time became subject to Baṣra and were run by the governor of Baṣra who appointed agents in charge of them; those agents were in direct contact with him. Thus Abu Moosa is regarded as one of the greatest governors of 'Umar and the correspondence between 'Umar and Abu Moosa is regarded as one of the greatest sources of information on the way that 'Umar interacted with his governors.[61]

1.8.2. Koofah

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ is regarded as the first governor of Koofah after it was founded; indeed he is the one who founded it, acting on 'Umar's instructions. He was the governor of Koofah and the surrounding regions before Koofah was built. Sa'd remained the governor of Koofah and played his role there to the fullest extent. After settling in Koofah, Sa'd achieved great conquests in Persia.[62]

Sa'd also introduced a number of agricultural reforms in his province, such as when a group of local chiefs asked him to dig a channel to serve the farmers in their areas. Sa'd wrote to his agents in that area ordering them to dig a channel for them. So his agent assembled some workers and dug it for them.

Sa'd organized the affairs of the regions belonging to Koofah, and appointed agents in charge of them, after consulting 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. The wise men of Koofah admired and praised Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ.

When 'Umar asked Jareer ibn 'Abdullâh ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ about Sa'd and the way he was running the affairs of

[61] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/120.

[62] *Futooḥ al-Buldân*, p. 139; *Târeekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/151.

governorship, Jareer said: "I left him in his province the most noble of men, with the strongest authority and the least harshness; he is like a caring mother towards them. He is the strongest of men at times of war and the most beloved of Quraysh to the people."[63]

Although the elite and wise men of Koofah accepted and praised Sa'd, there were some complaints about him that were made by some of the common folk, so he was dismissed, as we will discuss more fully when we look at the complaints that were made against governors. After the dismissal of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, 'Umar issued a decree appointing 'Ammâr ibn Yâsir to lead the prayers in Koofah. It may be noted that 'Ammâr was one of the leaders in Koofah, and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ used to seek the help of those leaders during his governorship. Hence 'Ammâr had extensive prior experience of governorship before he was appointed as governor. 'Ammâr's governorship differed from Sa'd's, because 'Umar appointed other people with 'Ammâr to share the responsibility and undertake different tasks. 'Ammâr was to lead the prayers, Ibn Mas'ood was in charge of the *bayt al-mâl* and 'Uthmân ibn Ḥunayf was in charge of measuring land. Hence the situation differed somewhat to the situation at the time of Sa'd. We cannot ignore this new distribution of responsibility in the governorship. Each of them did the tasks that were allocated to him. 'Ammâr led the prayers, organized the affairs of the province and led the army, and he achieved some conquests. During his governorship the people of Koofah took part in a number of battles against the Persians who had rallied their troops against the Muslims. 'Ammâr organized his province in accordance with this war situation, following 'Umar's instructions. 'Ammâr continued to do his duties in the province of Koofah with Ibn Mas'ood who, alongside his running the financial affairs of the province also taught

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[63] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/123.

the people Qur'an and religious matters.[64] 'Ammâr's governorship of Koofah lasted for approximately one year and nine months. 'Umar dismissed him on the basis of a number of complaints made by the people of Koofah against him. 'Umar said to 'Ammâr: "Are you upset because of this dismissal?" 'Ammâr said: "I was not happy when I was appointed, but I was upset when I was dismissed." And it was said that he said: "I did not feel happy when you appointed me and I was not sad when you dismissed me."[65] It is also reported that he asked 'Umar to let him off this job when he felt that the people of Koofah did not like him, so 'Umar let him off and did not dismiss him.[66]

Then 'Umar appointed Jubayr ibn Muṭ'im as governor of Koofah, then he dismissed him before he set out for Koofah, because 'Umar had ordered him to conceal the news of this appointment, but the news spread among the people, so 'Umar became angry and dismissed him. Then he appointed al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah as governor of Koofah and he continued in that post until 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) died.[67]

1.8.3. Al-Madâ'in

Al-Madâ'in was the capital of Chosroes, which was conquered by Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ. Sa'd settled there for a while, then he moved to Koofah after it was founded. One member of Sa'd's army was Salmân al-Fârisi (ﷺ), who took part in a number of battles against the Persians and played a major role in calling them to Islam before fighting took place. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb appointed him as

[64] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/157.

[65] *Al-Futooḥ* by Ibn A'tham, 2/82.

[66] *Nihâyat al-Irb*, 19/368.

[67] *Târeekh Khaleefah*, p. 155; *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/239.

governor of al-Madâ'in and he treated it's people well. He was a living example of the application of Islamic teachings. It is reported that he would have refused the post of governor, were it not that 'Umar forced him to accept it. He used to write to 'Umar asking him to let him off, but 'Umar refused. Salmân (ﷺ) was well known for his asceticism. He used to wear wool, ride a donkey and eat barley bread; he lived a very simple life.[68]

Salmân remained in al-Madâ'in until he died, most likely in 32 A.H., during the caliphate of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. It seems that Salmân was not the governor of al-Madâ'in at the end of 'Umar's caliphate, because 'Umar appointed Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân as governor of al-Madâ'in, but the historians did not state that 'Umar dismissed Salmân. Perhaps he asked 'Umar to let him off and 'Umar agreed after having refused to let him off, and he appointed Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân as governor after him. There are numerous reports which speak of Ḥudhayfah's appointment as governor of al-Madâ'in, such as the letter sent by 'Umar to the people of al-Madâ'in appointing Ḥudhayfah as their governor, in which 'Umar told the people of al-Madâ'in to hear and obey Ḥudhayfah. Ḥudhayfah remained governor of al-Madâ'in for the remainder of 'Umar's caliphate and throughout the caliphate of 'Uthmân.[69]

1.8.4. Azerbaijan

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân was the first governor of Azerbaijan. After he moved to al-Madâ'in, 'Utbah ibn Farqad as-Sulami was appointed as governor of Azerbaijan. During his governorship there was a great deal of correspondence between him and 'Umar. When 'Utbah ibn Farqad came to Azerbaijan he found that they had a kind

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[68] *Murooj adh-Dhahab*, 2/306; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/131.

[69] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 2/364.

of sweet dish called *al-khabees*, so he decided to have some made for 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb; he wrapped it in skins and other things to preserve it, and sent it to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb in Madeenah. When he received it, he tasted the *khabees* and liked it. 'Umar said: "Have all the *Muhâjireen* eaten their fill of it?" The envoy said, "No, it is something that he made just for you." So 'Umar ordered him to take it back to 'Utbah in Azerbaijan and he wrote to him saying: "O' 'Utbah, this is not from your wealth or the wealth of your fathers. Let the Muslims eat their fill in their camps of what you have eaten your fill of in your camp. Beware of luxury and of wearing the clothes of the people of *shirk* and of wearing silk, for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) forbade wearing silk."[70] This incident is narrated in numerous reports which support one another. 'Utbah continued as governor of Azerbaijan for the remainder of 'Umar's caliphate and for part of 'Uthmân's caliphate.

There were a number of governors in various regions of Iraq and Persia during the time of 'Umar, some of whose provinces were separate and others whose provinces were connected to one of the two great provinces of Iraq, where the administration of all of Iraq and Persia was based, namely Koofah and Baṣra. Among the cities which had their own governors were Moṣul, Ḥalwân and Kaskar.[71]

2. Appointment of Governors at the Time of 'Umar

'Umar followed the method of the Prophet (ﷺ) in selecting governors. He only appointed those who were qualified, trustworthy

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[70] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/133.

[71] Ibid, 1/133, 134, 135.

and more suited than others for this type of work, striving to make the best choice. He did not appoint anyone who asked to be a governor. He thought that selecting governors was akin to fulfilling a trust, whereby he was obliged to appoint the best man he could find for each post, and turning away from the best candidate and choosing someone else would be a betrayal of Allah, His Messenger and the believers.[72] Concerning this, he said: "I am responsible for my trust and what I am in charge of. I will examine all the issues myself, *insha' Allâh*, and I will not delegate that to anyone. I can only rely on those who are trustworthy and sincere towards the Muslims, and I will not rely on anyone else."[73] And he said: "Whoever appoints a man over a group when there is a man in that group who is more pleasing to Allah, has betrayed Allah, betrayed His Messenger and betrayed the believers."[74] He also said: "Whoever is appointed in charge of some of the affairs of the Muslims and he appoints a man because of friendship or blood ties, has betrayed Allah, His Messenger and the Muslims."[75]

2.1. The most important bases on which 'Umar appointed governors and the conditions he stipulated for them

2.1.1. Capability and trustworthiness

'Umar applied this principle and preferred more capable men over others. He dismissed Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah and appointed Mu'âwiyah instead. Shuraḥbeel said to him: "Did you dismiss me

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[72] *Waqâ'i' Nadwah an-Nadhm al-Islâmiyah*, 1/295, 296.

[73] *Dawr al-Ḥijâz fee al-Ḥayât as-Siyâsiyah*, p. 255.

[74] *Al-Fatâwa*, 28/42.

[75] Ibid, 28/138.

because you are not pleased with me, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?" He said, "No; I think well of you, but I wanted a man who is more capable."[76] One of the most eloquent comments narrated from 'Umar concerning this matter is his saying: "O' Allah, I complain to You of the capability of the evildoer and the incapability of the trustworthy one."[77]

2.1.2. The role of knowledge in appointment of governors

'Umar followed the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in appointing leaders of the army in particular. Aṭ-Ṭabari said: "When an army of believers gathered around 'Umar, he would appoint over them a man who had knowledge and understanding of Islam."[78]

2.1.3. Knowing how to do things

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb appointed some people, and did not appoint others who were of greater virtue than them, because the former knew how to do things.[79] In this case, those whom 'Umar passed over were better in terms of religious commitment and piety, and better in character, but their experience in running affairs was less than that of others. It was not essential to combine both factors. This principle which was set out by 'Umar is still followed today in the most advanced nations, where a man of religious commitment, piety and good character who does not have any experience of matters of government is more likely to be ensnared by the tricks of those who follow their whims and desires. But the one who is smart

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[76] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/39.

[77] *Al-Fatâwa*, 28/42.

[78] *Nidhâm al-Ḥukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 1/479.

[79] *Al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah Fajr al-Islâm*, 2/56.

and experienced will grasp things quickly and understand what is behind the spoken word. This is the very reason why 'Umar would avoid appointing a man who did not know anything about evil. He asked about a man whom he wanted to appoint as an agent and he was told, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, he does not know anything about evil." 'Umar said to the man, "Woe to you, he is more likely to fall into it."[80] This is not one of the characteristics required for administration and ruling, rather the criterion for determining who is best suited for this field is knowledge of how to do the job.[81]

2.1.4. Desert-dwellers and town-dwellers

When appointing governors and agents, 'Umar would pay attention to their characteristics, natures, customs and habits. It was known that he would not appoint a desert-dweller in charge of town-dwellers.[82] Thus he paid attention to social and behavioural factors when selecting employees. Both desert-dwellers and town-dwellers have their own natures, attitudes, customs and traditions, and it is natural that the governor should understand the mentality of those under his care; it is not fair to appoint over them a man who knows nothing of that, who may regard their customs as odd and their nature as strange.[83]

2.1.5. Compassion and mercy towards those of whom he is in charge

'Umar (ﷺ) sought to achieve compassion and mercy towards those of whom the governor was in charge. He often told the leaders

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[80] *Nidhâm al-Ḥukm fee ash-Sharee'ah wa at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 1/482.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid, 1/282.

[83] Ibid, 1/283.

of jihad not to undertake unnecessarily risky missions and not to put the Muslims in grave danger. 'Umar wrote to a man from Banu Aslam appointing him to some position of authority. The man entered to meet 'Umar and saw 'Umar kissing one of his children who was on his lap. The man said, "Do you do this, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*? By Allah, I have never kissed any child of mine." 'Umar said, "Then by Allah you are the least merciful of people. You will never do any work for me." So 'Umar rejected him and did not appoint him.[84]

One of his armies went on a campaign in Persia and reached a river that had no bridge. The commander of the army ordered one of his soldiers to go down on a very cold day and look for a place where the army could cross. The man said: "I am afraid that I will die if I enter the water." But the commander forced him to do that. The man entered the water, screaming, "O' 'Umar, O' 'Umar!" and soon after that he died. News of that reached 'Umar when he was in the marketplace of Madeenah, and he said, "Here I am, here I am!" He sent word dismissing the commander of that army and he said: "Were it not for the fact that I do not want to set a precedent, I would have retaliated against you. You will never do any work for me again."[85]

'Umar addressed his governors and said: "Know that no forbearance is more beloved to Allah and more far-reaching than the forbearance and kindness of a leader, and nothing is more hated by Allah and more far-reaching than the ignorance and foolishness of a leader."[86]

2.1.6. He did not appoint any of his relatives

'Umar was keen to avoid appointing any of his relatives, despite the fact that some of them were qualified and had come to

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[84] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/519.

[85] *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 150.

[86] *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 334.

Islam early on, such as his paternal cousin Sa'eed ibn Zayd and his son 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar. One of his companions heard him complaining about a problem with the people of Koofah and their governor, when 'Umar said: "Would that I could find a strong, trustworthy, Muslim man to appoint over them." The man said, "By Allah, I will tell you of one such, 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar." 'Umar said, "May Allah kill you! You did not say that for the sake of Allah."[87] And he used to say, "Whoever appoints a man because of friendship or blood ties, and for no other reason, has betrayed Allah and His Messenger."[88]

2.1.7. He did not appoint anyone who wanted to be appointed

He did not appoint any man who wanted to be appointed. Concerning that he said: "Whoever seeks this will not be appointed." In this approach he was following the Sunnah of the Messenger (ﷺ).

2.1.8. Forbidding governors and agents to engage in trade

'Umar forbade agents and governors to engage in trade, whether they were selling or buying.[89] It was narrated that an agent of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb whose name was al-Ḥârith ibn Ka'b ibn Wahb started to show signs of prosperity. 'Umar asked him about the source of this wealth and he replied: "I had some money and I engaged in trade with it." 'Umar said, "By Allah, we did not send

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[87] *Manâqib 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 108; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/128.

[88] *Al-Fatâwa*, 28/138.

[89] *Al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 213.

you to engage in trade!" and he took from his the profits that he had made.[90]

2.1.9. Recording the net worth of his agents at the time of their appointment

'Umar recorded the net worth of his agents and governors before they were appointed, so that he could bring them to account for any increase after their governorship that was not of a regular type of growth. Some of them tried to justify engaging in trade, but he did not accept what they said, and he told them: "We have sent you as governors, not as merchants."[91]

2.1.10. Conditions stipulated by 'Umar for his agents

When 'Umar appointed an agent, he would write a document for him, which he would have witnessed by a number of the Anṣâr, stipulating that he would not ride a non-Arabian horse, he would not eat fine bread, he would not wear fine clothes, and he would not close his door to Muslims in need. Then he would say, "O' Allah, bear witness."[92]

These conditions obliged the governor to adhere to a simple, ascetic life, and to be humble towards people. This is the first step in reforming the ummah by making them accept a moderate standard of living, clothing and transportation. With such a lifestyle that was based on moderation, its affairs would be set in order. This was a wise move, because 'Umar could not force every member of the ummah to do something that is not regarded as obligatory in Islam, but he could

[90] Op. cit.

[91] Ibid, p. 215.

[92] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 1/510.

force the governors and leaders to do that. If they committed themselves to that, they would be setting an example in society. This was a successful plan to reform society and protect it from the causes of decline.[93]

2.1.11. Consultation when selecting governors

The selection of governors was made after the caliph had consulted the senior *Ṣaḥâbah*.[94] 'Umar (ﷺ) said to his companions one day: "Show me a man who, if he is the leader of some people, it is as if he is not a leader, and if he is not a leader, it is as if he is a leader,"[95] and they pointed out ar-Rabee' ibn Ziyâd.[96]

'Umar consulted the *Ṣaḥâbah* as to whom he should appoint as governor of Koofah, and said to them: "Who could tackle the problems of the people of Koofah for me, and their false accusations against their governors? If I appoint over them a man with good morals, they will regard him as weak, but if I appoint over them one who is strong, they will force him to overstep the limit with them." Then he said: "O' people, what do you say about a man who is weak but is a pious Muslim, and another who is strong and tough but not so religiously committed? Which one is better suited to be a governor?" Al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah spoke up and said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, the weak Muslim's commitment to Islam counts in his favour but his weakness counts against you and the Muslims; the fact that the strong man is less pious counts against him but his strength counts in your favour and that of the Muslims. So do what you think is best." 'Umar said, "You have spoken the truth, O' Mugheerah."

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[93] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 19, 20/268.

[94] *'Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 114.

[95] *Farâ'id al-Kalâm*, p. 165.

[96] Ibid.

Then he appointed him as governor of Koofah and said to him, "Try to be one whom the righteous trust and the evildoers fear." Al-Mugheerah (ﷺ) said, "I shall try my best, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen.*"[97]

2.1.12. Testing agents before appointing them

'Umar tested his agents before appointing them, and in some cases this testing took a long time, as was stated clearly by al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays who said: "I came to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) and he kept me with him (in Madeenah) for a year. He said, 'O' Aḥnaf, I have been testing you and I have seen that you are outwardly good, and I hope that you are as inwardly (good) as you are outwardly. We used to say that this ummah will be doomed by knowledgeable hypocrites.' Then 'Umar asked him, 'Do you know why I kept you here?' He explained to him that he had wanted to test him, then he appointed him as a governor.[98] Among the advice he gave to al-Aḥnaf was the following, 'O' Aḥnaf, one who laughs too much loses dignity; one who jokes too much loses respect; whoever does something a great deal becomes known for it; one who speaks a great deal makes mistakes; one who makes many mistakes loses his sense of dignity. Whoever loses his sense of dignity loses his fear of Allah, and whoever loses his fear of Allah is spiritually dead.' "[99]

2.1.13. Making the governor one of the people

It may be noted that in many cases, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) appointed some people as governors over their own people, if he saw

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[97] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/128.

[98] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/142; *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, p. 117.

[99] *Ṣifat aṣ-Ṣafwah*, 1/287.

that that served a purpose and if the man was qualified to be a governor. For example, he appointed Jâbir ibn 'Abdullâh al-Bajali over his people Bajeelah[100] when he sent them to Iraq. Similarly, he appointed Salmân al-Fârisi over al-Madâ'in, Nâfi' ibn al-Ḥârith over Makkah and 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ over aṭ-Ṭâ'if. Perhaps there were specific goals behind that, which these people were more able to achieve than others.[101]

2.1.14. Letter of appointment

It was well known that when 'Umar had made his final selection of a governor and had consulted his consultants, he would write a document for the governor which was known as a contract of appointment. Many such texts of appointment by 'Umar have been narrated[102], but most historians are agreed when 'Umar appointed an agent or governor, he would write a document for him which he would have witnessed by a number of the *Muhâjireen* and Anṣâr, and in which he would stipulate certain conditions.[103] If the person who had been nominated as a governor was absent, 'Umar would write a contract for him, in which he would instruct him to go to his new province. For example, he wrote to al-'Alâ' ibn al-Ḥaḍrami, his governor in Baḥrain, ordering him to go to Baṣrah and take over as governor there after 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân. When he dismissed one governor and appointed another, the new governor would take the letter which included the decree dismissing the first governor and appointing him in his stead. For example, 'Umar sent a letter with Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari when he dismissed al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah

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[100] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/142.

[101] Ibid.

[102] *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 407.

[103] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/144.

from his post as governor of Baṣra and appointed Abu Moosa in his stead.[104]

2.1.15. Not seeking the help of a Christian with the affairs of the Muslims

When news of the conquest of Syria came to 'Umar, he said to Abu Moosa: "Call your scribe to read this to the people in the mosque." Abu Moosa said, "He cannot enter the mosque." 'Umar asked, "Why not? Is he *junub*?" He said, "No, rather he is a Christian." 'Umar rebuked him and said, "Do not bring them near when Allah has cast them away; do not honour them when Allah has humiliated them; do not trust them when Allah has stated that they are treacherous. I have forbidden you to employ people of the Book, for they accept bribes."[105]

It was narrated that Usiqq[106] said: "I was a Christian slave of 'Umar's, and he said, 'Become Muslim so that we may appoint you over some of the Muslims' affairs, because we cannot appoint over their affairs one who is not one of them.' He set me free as he was dying and said, 'Go wherever you want.'"[107]

2.2. The most important characteristics of 'Umar's governors

Among the most important characteristics of 'Umar's governors were: strength of faith, Islamic knowledge, trust in Allah,

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[104] Op. cit., 2/49.

[105] *Badâ'i' as-Sâlik*, 2/27.

[106] He was mentioned by Ibn Ḥajr in *al-Iṣâbah*.

[107] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/514; *aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 6/158.

exemplary conduct, sincerity, being qualified for the post, courage, chivalry, asceticism, love of sacrifice, humility, acceptance of advice, forbearance, patience, ambition, resolve, strong willpower, justice, the ability to solve problems, and other such characteristics. The most important of these were:

2.2.1. Asceticism (*Zuhd*)

Among the governors of 'Umar who were well known for their asceticism were: Sa'eed ibn 'Âmir ibn Ḥudhaym, 'Umayr ibn Sa'd, Salmân al-Fârisi, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ and Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (may Allah be pleased with them all). The wives of some of his governors came to 'Umar and complained because of their husbands' asceticism. The wife of Mu'âdh ibn Jabal (ﷺ) complained because 'Umar had sent Mu'âdh to distribute shares (from *bayt al-mâl*) to some tribes, so he shared them out until there was nothing left, then he came back empty-handed. His wife asked: "Where is your share, that agents usually get for their families?" He said, "Someone was watching me." She said, "You were trusted by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and by Abu Bakr; why did 'Umar send someone with you to watch you?" She went to her women and complained about 'Umar, and when news of that reached 'Umar, he summoned Mu'âdh and asked, "Did I send someone with you to watch you?" He said, "I couldn't find any other excuse to give her." 'Umar smiled and gave him something, and said, "Make her happy with this."[108]

2.2.2. Humility

The governors at 'Umar's time were well known for their great humility, such that when people came to their lands, they could not

[108] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/53.

distinguish between them and the common folk. In their clothing, housing and mounts they were like the ordinary people, and they did not distinguish themselves from them in any way. An example of that is the story of Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ (ﷺ). The Byzantines sent a man to him to negotiate with him, and when he came close to the Muslims, he could not tell Abu 'Ubaydah apart from his companions; he did not know whether he was among them or not, and he did not feel that he was in the presence of a governor. He asked them: "O' Arabs, where is your leader?" They said, "There he is." He looked and he saw Abu 'Ubaydah sitting on the ground, with a bow on his shoulder and examining an arrow that he held in his hand. The envoy asked him, "Are you the leader of these men?" He said, "Yes." He then asked, "Then why are you sitting on the ground? Why don't you sit on a cushion?" Abu 'Ubaydah said, "Allah is not too shy to speak the truth, and I will tell you the truth about what you have said. I do not have any wealth; I own nothing but my horse, my weapon and my sword. Yesterday I needed some money and I had nothing, so I borrowed some money from this brother of mine who had some — meaning Mu'âdh. He lent it to me. If I also had a rug or a cushion, I would not sit on it and exclude my bothers and companions; I would let my brother sit on it, for he may be better than me before Allah. We are slaves of Allah. We walk on the earth, we sit on the ground, we eat on the ground, we lie down on the ground, and that does not lower us in status before Allah at all. Rather Allah increases our reward thereby and raises us in status, and thus we show humility before our Lord."[109]

2.2.3. Piety

Many governors were keen to be relieved of the task that had been entrusted to them. 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân asked 'Umar to let him

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[109] *Futooḥ ash-Shâm* by al-Azdi, Pp. 122, 123.

off from the governorship of Baṣra, but he did not let him off.[110] An-Nu'mân ibn Maqran, who was the governor of Kaskar, asked 'Umar to let him off from being governor and let him go for jihad so that he could seek martyrdom.[111] Some of the *Ṣaḥâbah* refused governor posts when 'Umar asked them to work as governors. Az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awâm refused the governorship of Egypt when 'Umar offered it to him, saying, "O' Abu 'Abdullâh, would you like to be the governor of Egypt?" He said, "I have no need of that, rather let me go out as a *mujâhid* to help the Muslims."[112] Ibn 'Abbâs refused the governorship of Homs when 'Umar offered it to him after the death of its governor.[113]

2.2.4. Respect for previous governors

The governors were distinguished by their respect for the governors who had preceded them. This may be noted in the majority of governors at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. For example, when Khâlid ibn al-Waleed came to Syria as governor over Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ and others, he refused to lead Abu 'Ubaydah in prayer. When 'Umar dismissed Khâlid ibn al-Waleed from his post as commander of the army in Syria, and appointed Abu 'Ubaydah in his stead, Abu 'Ubaydah hid this news from Khâlid and did not tell him of that until another letter came from 'Umar. Then Khâlid found out the news and he rebuked Abu 'Ubaydah for not telling him.[114] Dr. 'Abdul-'Azeez al-'Umari said: "During my research I could not find any governor who sought to humiliate or criticize those who had

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[110] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/54.

[111] Ibid.

[112] *Futooḥ al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, p. 214.

[113] *Al-Khirâj* by Abu Yoosuf, Pp. 22, 23.

[114] *Târeekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/139, 140.

come before him. Rather in most cases they praised them in the first speech given."[115]

2.3. Rights of governors

Undoubtedly the governors had various rights, some of which had to do with the people and some with the caliph, in addition to rights concerning the *bayt al-mâl*. All of these rights, both intangible and financial, were primarily aimed at helping governors to fulfil their duties and serve Islam. The most important of these rights were:

2.3.1. Obedience so long as that did not involve sin

The people's duty to obey leaders and governors is confirmed in Islam. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴾O' you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger [Muhammad], and those of you [Muslims] who are in authority. [And] if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.﴿ *(Qur'an 4: 59)*

This verse states that it is obligatory to obey those in authority, which includes the governors who are implementing the commands of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted.[116] Undoubtedly obedience to leaders and caliphs is limited to matters of obedience towards Allah; if they commit sin, there is no duty to obey them.[117]

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[115] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/55.

[116] Ibid, 2/56.

[117] Ibid.

2.3.2. Giving advice to governors

A man came to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and said to him: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, is it better for me to speak the truth without fearing anyone except Allah, or should I just focus on myself?" He said, "One who has been appointed over any of the affairs of the believers should not fear anyone except Allah, but one who has not been given any such appointment should focus on himself and be sincere towards his leader."[118]

2.3.3. Conveying news to governors

The people are obliged to bring correct news to their governors and to be truthful in doing so as much as possible, whether it has to do with the general public or it is news of the enemy, or it has to do with the agents and employees of the governor, especially when that has to do with matters of war and news of the enemy, or with treacherous acts etc., on the basis of helping the governor to look after the interests of the ummah.[119]

2.3.4. Supporting the governor in his decisions

If his decisions support the public interest and he mostly needs the support of the caliph, then the caliph should support him. 'Umar (ﷺ) was very enthusiastic about this principle, because he understood the importance of people showing respect to their governors. Even though 'Umar was strict with his governors, if he found out that there was some transgression against one of them, he would deal harshly with the aggressors, so that the governors would

[118] *Al-Khirâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 15; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/57.

[119] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/57.

continue to be respected and would remain able to control the people, both the common folk and the elite.[120]

2.3.5. The governor's right to engage in ijtihad

It is the governor's right to work out an answer in matters where there is room for ijtihad, especially in cases where Islam has not given a precise definition or in other matters where there are no instructions or guidelines from the caliph. One of 'Umar's governors in Syria worked out a system of distributing booty among the cavalry and infantry, and 'Umar allowed his ijtihad. It is well known that when Ibn Mas'ood was one of 'Umar's governors, he disagreed with 'Umar in more than one hundred matters of ijtihad.[121]

2.3.6. Respecting them after their dismissal

One of the rights of the governors was that they were to be respected after having been dismissed. When 'Umar dismissed Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah from his post as governor of Jordan, he told the people the reason for his dismissal and when Shuraḥbeel asked him, "Did you dismiss me because you are displeased with me, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*?" he said, "No, I think well of you, but I want a man who is more capable than you."[122] He dismissed Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) from his post as governor of Koofah and perhaps he thought that in order to protect his dignity he should keep him away from people who used to criticize him with regard to his prayer, even though Sa'd most closely imitated the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) because of his knowledge of how the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed.

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[120] Op. cit., 1/152.

[121] *I'lâm al-Muwaqq'ieen,* 2/218.

[122] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/39.

So 'Umar dismissed him out of respect for him, so as to protect him from exposed to the ignorant.[123]

2.3.7. Their material rights

The governors also had rights with regard to material matters, chief of which was the salaries on which they lived. Undoubtedly the *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them), led by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, understood the importance of providing agents with an income, and acknowledged this as one of their rights, in addition to it being a means of making them independent of people, and thus not subject to their influence or attempts to bribe them.[124] 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb was keen for his agents to be honest and to have no desire for people's wealth, so he made them independent of means. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb was aware that this is a serious matter and that in order to guarantee the honesty of his agents, it was essential to make them independent so that they would feel no need for people's wealth. There was a discussion between him and Abu 'Ubaydah, in which Abu 'Ubaydah said to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb: "You have made the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) indulge in worldly matters" — i.e., by using them as governors. 'Umar said, "O' Abu 'Ubaydah, If I do not seek the help of the pious in fulfilling my duties towards Allah, then whose help should I seek?" Abu 'Ubaydah said, "If you must do that, then make them independent of means so that they will not betray you"[125] — i.e., if you appoint them to any post, then be generous in giving them salaries, so that they will have no need to be dishonest and will have no need of people.

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[123] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 2/59.

[124] Ibid, 2/60.

[125] *Al-Khirâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 122.

'Umar gave to the commanders of armies and towns, and to all his agents, salaries that were reasonably sufficient, in return for their work (as much as they needed for their food and to take care of other issues).[126] He was keen that they should be honest concerning the public wealth that was under their control and he said to his agents: "As far as this wealth is concerned, I regard you and myself as being like one who is entrusted with the wealth of an orphan:

﴿... And whoever [amongst guardians] is rich, he should take no wages, but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable [according to his labour]...﴾ *(Qur'an 4: 6)*."[127]

'Umar gave nearly all his agents a fixed salary, whether it was daily, monthly or annual. Some of these salaries are mentioned in the historical sources; in some cases the salary was given in the form of food, in other cases it was a set amount of money.[128]

It is narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) employed 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood in charge of the judiciary and the *bayt al-mâl*, 'Uthmân ibn Ḥaneef in charge of what was irrigated by the Euphrates and 'Ammâr ibn Yâsir in charge of prayer and the troops. He gave them a sheep each day, giving half of it and its organs and feet to 'Ammâr ibn Yâsir, because he was in charge of prayers and the troops; and he gave one quarter of it to 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood and the other quarter to 'Uthmân ibn Ḥaneef.

It is also narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb gave 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ a salary of two hundred *dinârs* when he was governor of Egypt.[129] The salary of Salmân al-Fârisi when he was in charge of thirty thousand people in al-Madâ'in was five thousand *dirhams*;

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[126] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/149.

[127] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 2/694; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/149.

[128] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/150.

[129] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra*, 4/261.

because of his asceticism he used to eat from what he earned by his own hands by making mats of palm-leaves, and he would give his salary in charity.[130]

There are various other reports about the salaries that 'Umar gave to his governors; undoubtedly the variations mentioned in these reports stem from ongoing developments and changes during 'Umar's caliphate; it does not make sense to think that salaries would remain the same from the beginning to the end of his reign, since circumstances changed, prices varied and needs altered as the result of the spread of conquests and the increased income to the *bayt al-mâl*.[131] It is narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb gave Mu'âwiyah a salary of ten thousand *dinârs* per year for his work as governor of Syria, and 'Umar gave the leaders of armies and towns salaries that ranged between seven and nine thousand, according to what they needed of food and other things.[132]

Some agents did not want to take these salaries in return for their work as governors for the Muslims, but 'Umar made them accept them. 'Umar said to one of his governors: "Did I not tell you to take care of some of the Muslims' affairs, and now when you are given money in return for your work, you object?" He said, "That's right." 'Umar said, "Why is that?" He said, "I have horses and slaves and I am well off. I want my work to be an act of charity for the Muslims." 'Umar said, "Do not do that. I wanted to do the same thing that you want. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) would give me a payment and I would say, 'Give it to one who has more need of it than me.' But the Prophet (ﷺ) said, «'Take it and keep it, and give some in charity. Whatever of this money comes to you without you

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[130] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 1/547.

[131] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/63.

[132] *Al-Khirâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 50; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/63.

asking for it or hoping for it, take it, otherwise do not wish for it'.»' "[133]

Whatever the case, the principle of giving salaries to agents and making them independent of the people is an Islamic principle which was enjoined by the Messenger (ﷺ) and followed by the Rightly-Guided Caliphs after him. They made their agents independent so that they had no need of people's wealth, and they freed them to work in the interests of the Islamic state.[134]

2.3.8. Treating agents and governors if they fell sick

Mu'ayqeeb, who was 'Umar's keeper of the *bayt al-mâl*, fell sick, and 'Umar asked for a remedy for him from everyone who had any medical knowledge. Then two men came from Yemen and he asked: "Do you have any remedy that you can offer this righteous man, for his pain is getting worse?" They said, "We cannot take away his illness, but we can give him some treatment that will stop it from getting any worse." 'Umar said, "It will be a blessing if it stops it from getting any worse." They said, "Does colocynth (bitter-apple) grow in your land?" He said, "Yes." They said, "Gather some of it for us." 'Umar issued orders and two large basketfuls were gathered for him. They went and cut each colocynth in two, then they made Mu'ayqeeb lie down. Each of them took one of his feet and started rubbing the bottom of the foot with the colocynth; when it wore out they picked up another and carried on. Then they let him go. 'Umar said, "His pain will not get worse." The narrator said: "By Allah, after that Mu'ayqeeb was fine and his pain did not get any worse, until he died."[135]

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[133] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/64; *al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah*, Muhammad Karad, p. 48.

[134] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/64.

[135] *Akhbâr 'Umar Ṭanṭâwiyât*, p. 341.

2.4. Duties of governors

Because of the position in which Allah had put them, and the heavy burden that was placed on their shoulders, 'Umar took care to remind them of the following duties:

2.4.1. Establishing religious affairs

Such as spreading Islam among the people, establishing regular prayer, protecting Islam and its fundamentals, building mosques, organizing the Ḥajj, and carrying out *ḥadd* punishments.

Spreading Islam

This period was a time of great conquests, which meant that governors had to strive to spread Islam in the conquered lands, with the help of the *Ṣaḥâbah* who were with them.[136] At the time of 'Umar, Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân, who was a governor in Syria, wrote to him saying: "The people of Syria are many in number and have filled the cities; they need someone to teach them the Qur'an and Islam; help me with men who can teach them." So 'Umar sent five of the *fuqaha'* of the *Ṣaḥâbah* to him.[137] 'Umar was well known for frequently saying, "By Allah, I do not send my governors to you to beat you and take your wealth; rather I send them to you to teach you your religion and the Sunnah of your Prophet."[138] 'Umar used to say to his governors: "We have not appointed you to shave the hair of the Muslims and to beat them; rather we have appointed you to establish regular prayer and teach them the Qur'an."[139] And 'Umar sent a number of teachers to the Islamic cities where they founded famous

[136] *I'lâm al-Muwaqqi'een*, 2/247.

[137] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 2/247.

[138] *As-Siyâsah ash-Shar'iyyah*, p. 150.

[139] *Naṣeeḥat al-Mulook* by al-Mâwardi, p. 72; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/65.

schools, as we have mentioned above.

Establishing regular prayer

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) would write to his governors: "The most important of your affairs in my view is prayer; whoever prays regularly has protected his faith, but whoever neglects it is bound to be more negligent in other issues of faith."[140]

'Umar also emphasized to his governors the importance of establishing regular prayer among the people, as he said: "We have appointed you to establish regular prayer and teach them knowledge and the Qur'an."[141] 'Umar would state in his letters of appointment that So and so was in charge of the prayer and the troops, as in the document in which he appointed 'Ammâr ibn Yâsir in charge of the prayer and the troops, and 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood in charge of the judiciary and the *bayt al-mâl*.[142] The *fuqaha'* who wrote about Islamic politics spoke of the importance of prayer with regard to the ruler, and how that had great significance in this world and in the Hereafter.[143]

Protecting Islam and its fundamentals

'Umar was keen to protect Islam and its sound bases, which had been revealed to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He strove hard to revive the Sunnah of the Messenger and to put an end to innovation. He also strove to respect the religion of Allah and revive the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He ordered that a man be exiled because he frequently provoked discussions about the ambiguous verses of the Qur'an.[144] He also enjoined *qiyâm* (*Tarâweeḥ*) in

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[140] *Aṭ-Ṭareeqah al-Ḥakamiyah*, p. 240; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/67.

[141] *Naṣeeḥat al-Mulook*, p. 72.

[142] *Al-Aḥkâm as-Sulṭâniyah*, p. 33.

[143] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/67.

[144] Ibid, 2/68.

Ramaḍân, and issued similar instructions for all regions.[145] He wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari saying: "I have heard that some people under your care are using the call of the *Jâhiliyah* (calling on their people to attack other people); when this letter of mine reaches you, punish them severely both financially and physically, so that they will be scared even if they do not understand.[146]

Building mosques

Some statistics state that 4000 mosques were built during 'Umar's caliphate in the Arab regions alone. The governors were well known for building mosques in the areas that they governed, such as 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam, who founded a number of mosques in various parts of Arabia.[147]

Organizing the Ḥajj

At the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, the governors were responsible for organizing the pilgrims' affairs and ensuring the safety of those who were going for Ḥajj from their provinces. The governors appointed leaders for the Ḥajj caravans and stipulated the times of travel so that the pilgrims would not leave except with the governor's permission. The *fuqaha'* subsequently stipulated that organizing the pilgrims was one of the tasks of the governor.[148]

Carrying out ḥadd punishments

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ carried out the *ḥadd* punishment on one of the sons of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb in Egypt, then 'Umar himself punished him, and it was said that he died from the effects of that whipping.[149]

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[145] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/68.

[146] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 133.

[147] *Futooḥ al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, p. 182; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/69.

[148] *Al-Aḥkâm as-Sulṭâniyah*, p. 33.

[149] *Manâqib 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by Ibn al-Jawzi, Pp. 240, 242.

The governors carried out *qiṣâṣ* executions without the permission of the caliph, until 'Umar wrote to them telling them: "Do not kill anyone without my permission."[150] So they began to ask 'Umar for permission to carry out executions before doing so. Carrying out *ḥadd* punishments is both a religious and a worldly matter that was taken as seriously by the caliphs and their governors as other rituals of Islam.[151]

2.4.2. Ensuring the people's security in their own lands

Maintaining security in the province was one of the most important duties of the governor. In order to achieve that, he would do a number of things, the most important of which was carrying out *ḥadd* punishments on sinners and evildoers in the case of crimes which threatened people's lives and property.[152] In a letter which 'Umar (ﷺ) sent to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari he said: "Make the evildoers scared..."[153]

Carrying out the duty of jihad against the enemy also played a major role in ensuring the security of the Islamic lands.[154]

2.4.3. Jihad for the sake of Allah

If we examine the names of the governors from the beginning of Abu Bakr's caliphate until the caliphate of 'Umar we will see that they played a major role in the conquests; indeed they were sent as

[150] *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 521.
[151] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/70.
[152] Ibid, 2/71.
[153] *'Uyoon al-Akhbâr*, 1/11.
[154] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/71.

commanders to the lands that had not yet been conquered, and they conquered them and then set about organizing their affairs — such as the governors of Syria, Abu 'Ubaydah, 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân and Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah, and the governors of Iraq such as al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam and others.[155]

At the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, as well as being administrators, the governors were also *Mujâhideen* who faced the enemy; that did not distract them from doing the duties that had been assigned to them. The historical sources speak of the deeds of the governors in support of the jihad movement, the most important of which were:

❖ <u>Sending volunteers for jihad</u>

❖ <u>Defending the province against the enemy</u>: 'Umar said, "Your right over me is that I should protect your borders."

❖ <u>Fortifying cities</u>: 'Umar issued orders that fortresses should be built for the tribes who went to settle in Giza, in Egypt, fearing that surprise attacks might be launched against them.[156]

❖ <u>Seeking out news of the enemy</u>: It is well known that Abu 'Ubaydah used to seek out precise information on Byzantine gatherings in Syria, and he would stage some tactical withdrawals on the basis of this information.[157]

❖ <u>Supplying horses to the regions</u>: 'Umar implemented a policy throughout the state of supplying horses that were needed for jihad throughout the Muslim regions, according to need. He allocated some land to the people of Baṣra for the breeding and

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[155] Op. cit., 2/72

[156] Ibid, 1/77.

[157] *Al-Futooḥ* by Ibn A'tham, p. 215.

training of horses.[158] 'Umar also gave some land to some of the Muslims in Damascus for the care of horses, but they cultivated it instead, so he took it away from them and imposed a fine on them, for going against the purpose for which the land had been given to them, which was to breed horses. 'Umar had four thousand horses in Koofah, which were looked after by Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili and some of the people of Koofah, who trained them and took care of them. There was a similar set-up in Baṣra and in all the eight regions.[159] These horses were prepared to go to the immediate defence of the Islamic state when needed.[160]

❖ <u>Teaching children and preparing them for jihad</u>: 'Umar wrote to the people of the regions, commanding them to teach their children horsemanship, swimming and archery. A boy was struck by an arrow during training in Syria and died. They wrote to 'Umar to tell him about that, but that did not deter him from his command to teach the children archery.[161]

❖ <u>Checking on records of the troops</u>: 'Umar paid special attention to the records of the troops, based on his belief that the people of the regions were most in need of such records, especially in the regions that were close to the enemy, for those were the regions that needed troops on an ongoing basis.[162]

The governors were directly responsible for the military records, despite the fact that there were some other officials who took care of that matter. But because the governors were also commanders

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[158] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/74.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Ibid.

[161] *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 486.

[162] *An-Nudhum al-Islâmiyah*, by Ṣubḥi aṣ-Ṣâliḥ, Pp. 488, 491.

of the troops, they were responsible for the military records in their lands, as deputies of the caliph.[163]

- Implementing treaties: Some treaties were drawn up between Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ and some of the cities of Syria; the same was also true of governors in Iraq, such as Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari and others. In addition to that, the governors were also keen to protect the individual and communal rights of the *dhimmis* and to implement the treaties, in accordance with the commands of shari'ah.[164] 'Umar enjoined proper care of *ahl adh-dhimmah* and said: "I urge you to take care of those who are under the protection of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), and to protect them from their enemies, and not to burden them with more than they can bear."[165]

2.4.4. Striving hard to ensure that people receive their stipends

'Umar said: "If I live, I would not leave the widows of Iraq in need of anyone after me." We should not forget the attitude of 'Umar during the year of ar-Ramâdah, when famine was widespread. 'Umar mobilized all the resources of the state to resolve the crisis and feed the hungry. Al-Bayhaqi narrated in his *Sunan* that 'Umar spent on the people affected by the famine of ar-Ramâdah, until rain fell and they started moving on from Madeenah. 'Umar went out to them, riding a horse, and watched as they were moving on, with tears flowing down his cheeks. A man from Banu Muḥârib ibn Khaṣfah said: "I bear witness that you are relieved, and you are not the son of slave woman" — praising 'Umar. 'Umar said to him, "Woe to you! I

[163] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 20/77.

[164] Ibid, 2/77.

[165] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 133.

would accept this praise if I had spent my own wealth or the wealth of al-Khaṭṭâb, but I spent the wealth of Allah."[166] And 'Umar said, "Your right over me is that I will not collect anything of your taxes and I will not take any of the booty (*fay'*) that Allah has bestowed upon you, except in a proper manner. Your right over me is that if I collect something, I will not spend it except in the proper manner. Your right over me is that I will increase your stipends and provision, if Allah wills."[167]

The distribution of stipends at the time of 'Umar was done regularly, in an organized manner. They were not given only to the inhabitants of the cities, rather the tribes in the desert were also given stipends. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb used to go around to the tribes who lived near Madeenah and distribute their stipends to them himself, and he wrote to some of his governors telling them to give the people their stipends and provision. 'Umar wrote saying that this was their booty that Allah had bestowed upon them; it did not belong to 'Umar or to the family of 'Umar, so divide it among the people.[168]

'Umar did not stop at making sure that people got their share, rather he also strove to ensure that people had enough food. During one of his visits to Syria, Bilâl ibn Rabâḥ came to him and said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, by Allah, the commanders of your army in Syria do not eat anything but the flesh of fowls and fine bread, but the common folk of the Muslim do not eat such things." 'Umar asked them, "Is what Bilâl is saying true?" Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân said to him, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, the prices in our country are low and we can buy that which Bilâl mentioned here for what it costs to feed our families in the Ḥijâz." 'Umar (ﷺ) said, "By Allah, I will not

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[166] *Sunan al-Bayhaqi*, 6/357; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 135.

[167] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 137.

[168] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/77.

leave until you guarantee for me the provision of the Muslims each month." Then he said, "See how much is sufficient for a man to get the food he likes." They said, "Two measures of wheat and enough olive oil and vinegar to go with it, at the beginning of each month." So they guaranteed that to him, then he said, "O' Muslims, this is in addition to your stipends. If your agents fulfil what I have allocated to you, and they give it to you every month, that is what I want. But if they do not do that, then tell me, so that I can dismiss them and appoint others in their stead."[169]

'Umar was also keen to distribute food throughout the regions, check on the markets and prevent hoarding, and his governors also checked on the markets. He also commanded merchants to travel and bring what the Muslims needed and make it available in their markets.[170] 'Umar and his governors did not stop at securing the food supply and checking on the markets only, rather the issue of accommodation and the distribution thereof was another task that was entrusted to the governors of towns and cities. When the new cities (*amsâr*) were founded and laid out, he distributed land to the people to live in, in Koofah and Basra[171] and in al-Fustât. The governors also supervised the division of houses in conquered cities such as Homs, Damascus, Alexandria, etc.[172]

2.4.5. Appointment of agents and employees

The appointment of agents and employees was another task that was allocated to the governors in many cases. A province usually consisted of a major city and other cities and regions that belonged to

[169] *Futooh ash-Shâm* by al-Azdi, p. 257; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/78.
[170] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 2/749.
[171] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala 'al-Buldân*, 2/79.
[172] *Futooh al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, Pp. 143, 224.

the province. It needed its affairs to be organized, so the governors appointed agents and employees to represent them in those areas, whether they were local leaders or collectors of taxes (*kharâj*). These appointments were usually made by agreement between the caliph and the governor.[173]

2.4.6. Taking care of *ahl adh-dhimmah*

Taking care of *ahl adh-dhimmah*, respecting treaties with them, fulfilling their rights as granted by shari'ah, asking them to do their duties towards the Muslims, checking on their situation, restoring their rights in accordance with shari'ah when they had been wronged, were all duties of the governor. The caliphs set specific conditions for *ahl adh-dhimmah* in most cases before entering into treaties with them, then they guaranteed their rights and asked them to adhere to those conditions.[174]

2.4.7. Consulting people of wisdom in the province and honouring prominent people

'Umar emphasized the importance of consulting wise people in their lands. The governors implemented this principle and held gatherings where they would consult the people. He commanded his governors to continually consult the people of wisdom[175], and he asked them to honour people in accordance with their status. 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari saying: "I have heard that you allow all kinds of people to come to you. When this letter of mine reaches you, allow the noble people and people of the Qur'an, piety and

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[173] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/79.

[174] Ibid, 2/80.

[175] Ibid.

religious commitment to come in first. When they have taken their sets, then allow the common folk to come in." He also wrote to him saying: "People refer their matters to the prominent people, so honour the prominent people, for it is enough for the weak Muslim to be treated fairly with regard to judgement and division of wealth."[176]

2.4.8. Looking at the developmental needs of the province

During his governorship, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ dug a channel in response to a request from some of the Persian leaders in the interests of the farmers in the area.[177] 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb wrote to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari commanding him to dig a channel for the people of Baṣra, and Abu Moosa dug a channel four parasangs long to bring water to the inhabitants of Baṣra.[178] When founding the famous cities of Koofah, Baṣra and al-Fusṭâṭ 'Umar's governors also paid attention to laying out streets, distributing land, building mosques, securing water sources and other public interests of these cities. They also encouraged people to settle in areas that were less desirable because of their proximity to the enemy or for other reasons. They offered them incentives and land grants to encourage them to remain there. 'Umar and 'Uthmân did that in Antioch (Antakiya) and in some parts of Mesopotamia.

2.4.9. Paying attention to the social affairs of the inhabitants of the provinces

When delegations came to 'Umar (ﷺ), he would ask them about their governor and they would say good things. He would ask

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176 *Naṣeeḥat al-Mulook* by al-Mâwirdi, p. 207; *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 134.

177 *Futooḥ al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, p. 273; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 872.

178 *Futooh al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, Pp. 351, 352.

them, Does he visit the sick? And they would say yes. He would ask them, Does he visit slaves when they are sick? And they would say yes. He would ask, How does he treat the weak? Do they sit at his door (waiting to be admitted)? If they said no to any of these questions, he would dismiss that governor.[179] 'Umar would dismiss a governor if he heard that he did not visit the sick and did not admit the weak.[180] 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb was also keen for his agents to appear humble before the people, so that the people would feel that the governor was one of them and was not different from them. 'Umar stipulated that his governors should ride mounts and wear clothes of the same standard as the people, and he forbade them to have doorkeepers and gatekeepers.[181]

2.4.10. Not discriminating between Arabs and non-Arabs

The governors were obliged to treat people equally and not to differentiate between Arabs and other Muslims. Some people came to a governor of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and he gave to the Arabs and not to the non-Arabs. 'Umar wrote to him saying: "It is sufficient evil for a man to despise his Muslim brother." According to another report, he wrote to him saying: "Why did you not treat them equally?"[182]

There are a number of other moral duties which are enjoined by Islam, such as fulfilling covenants, being sincere in one's work, remembering that Allah is always watching in everything that one

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[179] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/82.

[180] Ibid.

[181] Ibid.

[182] *Al-Wathâ'iq as-Siyâsiyah li'l-'Ahd an-Nabawi wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 523.

does, being prepared to cooperate with others in all good and righteous deeds, and the obligation to be sincere towards Allah, His Messenger, the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk, for this is in the interests of all.[183] In addition to adhering to these obligations, the governor was also required to propagate them among the people in his province, through his *khuṭbahs*, writing, preaching and dealings. The governors at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs — in general — were fine examples of these moral attitudes and duties, both in personal matters and in the way in which they interacted with the people.[184]

2.5. Translation in the provinces and the working hours of the governors

2.5.1. Translation in the provinces

Translation was regarded as a means of helping the governors at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, and there was a real need for it in many cases. 'Umar asked his governors in Iraq to send to Madeenah some of the Persian chieftains so that he could discuss the kharâj with them. They sent him some chieftains and a translator along with them.[185] It is reported that al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah knew a little of the Persian language, and he translated for 'Umar and al-Hormuzân in Madeenah.[186]

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[183] *An-Nadhariyât as-Siyâsiyah al-Islâmiyah* by Muhammad Ḍiya' ar-Rees, Pp. 307, 308.

[184] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/85.

[185] *Al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, Pp. 40, 41; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/105.

[186] Ibid.

Knowledge of translation is something that was well known in the Islamic state, at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and before that. If we remember that the *kharâj* records were not written in Arabic, then we will realize the extent of the need for translators in the provinces who could translate in cases of *kharâj* and other matters. The agents in charge of the *kharâj* were mostly Persians or non-Arabs. The spread of newcomers to the faith in the various Islamic regions also made the need for translation a top priority in judicial and other matters, as did the need for negotiations between the leaders of the conquests, who were mostly governors, and the peoples of the conquered lands.[187]

2.5.2. Working hours of the governors

There was no precise definition of the working hours at the time of 'Umar. The caliph and his governors worked at all hours, and they did not have doorkeepers. Some of them used to patrol at night, and their example in that regard was 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb himself, who was famous for walking about at night on his patrols of Madeenah. The people would meet the governor at various times, asking him to deal with their affairs, and they did not find anyone who would prevent them from entering to meet the governor on the grounds that this was not the time for work. The governors were well known for their eagerness to finish tasks straight away, with no delay. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb wrote concerning this to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, saying: "Do not put off today's work until tomorrow, lest work accumulate and you achieve nothing."[188]

[187] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/104.

[188] *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 129.

3. 'Umar's Checking on his Governors

3.1. Checking on governors

'Umar did not stop at selecting the best men to work as his agents and governors, rather he strove hard to follow up on them and check on them after appointing them, to be sure that they were doing well, and for fear that they might deviate or drift away. His slogan was: "It is better for me to dismiss one governor every day than to leave a wrongdoer in place for even one minute."[189] And he said: "Any governor of mine who wrongs anyone and I hear of his wrongdoing, if I do not change him, then I have wronged him."[190] One day he said to those who were around him: "What do you think, if I were to appoint over you the best one I could find, then command him to be just, would I have done what is required of me?" They said, "Yes." He said, "No, not until I see how he does, and whether he will do what I have commanded him or not."[191]

'Umar was very strict in checking on his governors and agents. His method of administration was to give his governors free rein in local affairs, to limit them with regard to public affairs, and then to watch and see how they dealt with things. He had a secret service which watched the governors and the people. The historical sources tell us that something like the modern-day intelligence services existed at the time of 'Umar and that he knew as much about those agents who were far away from him as those who slept with him in the same room. There was no region or area in which there was a

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[189] *An-Nadhm al-Islâmiyah,* by Ṣubḥi aṣ-Ṣâliḥ, p. 89; *al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah,* 215.

[190] *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 56; *al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah,* 215.

[191] *Al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb,* p. 215.

governor or army commander, but there were eyes constantly watching him, and the words uttered in the east and the west reached 'Umar every morning and evening. You can see that in the letters that he wrote to his governors and agents, and some agents would accuse the closest people to them of spying for 'Umar.[192] 'Umar had numerous means of checking on his governors, which included the following:

3.1.1. Asking the governors to enter Madeenah by day

'Umar asked his governors, when they came to Madeenah, to enter the city by day, and not at night, so that the wealth and booty that they brought could be seen and so that it would be easy to ask them questions and bring them to account.[193]

3.1.2. Asking the governors to send delegations

'Umar asked the governors to send delegations from the local people so that he could ask them about their lands and the *kharâj* that had been imposed on them, so as to ensure that they were not being wronged, and he asked them to give their testimony concerning the situation in their lands. The *kharâj* of Koofah was brought to him by ten of its people, and the *kharâj* of Baṣra was brought by a similar number. When they appeared before him, they testified by Allah that it was good (*ḥalâl*) wealth, and that no Muslim or *mu'âhad* had been wronged with regard to it.[194] This was sufficient to prevent governors from wronging the people. If that had happened, the delegates would have complained to 'Umar and told him about it. 'Umar usually held

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[192] *At-Tâj fee Akhlâq al-Mulook*, p. 168.

[193] *Fann al-Ḥukm*, p. 174.

[194] *Al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 124; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/157.

discussions with the delegates and asked them about their lands and about the governors and how they treated them.[195]

3.1.3. Mail service

'Umar sent mail to the governors in the various regions, and when the mail carrier wanted to return to Madeenah, he would issue orders that the call be given to the people, asking whether anyone wanted to send a letter to the caliph, so that he could carry it back to him without any interference from the local governor. The mail carrier himself did not know anything about the letters or their contents, thus the people had free rein to send complaints of wrongdoing to 'Umar himself without the governor or his men knowing anything about it. When the mail carrier reached 'Umar, he would give the letters he had to 'Umar, and 'Umar would read them and see what they said.[196]

3.1.4. The general inspector (Muhammad ibn Maslamah)

Muhammad ibn Maslamah al-Anṣâri was appointed by 'Umar to check on the governors and to examine any complaints that were made against them. The role of Muhammad ibn Maslamah was that of a general inspector in the caliphate. He checked on how the governors were doing their job and brought to account those who were falling short. 'Umar sent him to check on the senior governors[197], investigate complaints, to meet the people and listen to them, and to transmit their opinions of their governors directly to 'Umar. Muhammad ibn Maslamah also had some helpers.

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[195] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/157.

[196] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 2/761.

[197] *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, Pp 123-126.

3.1.5. The Ḥajj season

The Ḥajj season provided 'Umar with an opportunity to receive news about the people and the governors. He made it a season for reflecting, checking and seeking opinions from all regions, where those with complaints about wrongdoing would gather, and the "watchers" whom 'Umar had sent to all regions of his state to check on his agents and governors would report back to him. The agents themselves would also come to give an account of their actions. The season of Ḥajj was like a "general assembly" that was as refined as any general assembly in any era.[198] During the Ḥajj season, 'Umar would give a summary of the governors' duties to the people, then he said: "Whoever has been treated differently than that, let him stand up." No one of the people present stood up, on that occasion, except one man, which is indicative of the justice of those governors and how pleased the people were with them. That man said, "Your governor So and so gave me one hundred lashes." 'Umar asked the governor and did not receive any satisfactory answer, so he said to the man, "Get up and retaliate (*qiṣâṣ*)." 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ stood up and said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, if you do that it will happen a lot and it will become something regular after you are gone." 'Umar said, "How can I not settle scores when I saw the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) allowing others to settle scores with him?" 'Amr said, "Let us make a deal with him." He said, "Here he is, make a deal with him." So the agent gave him two hundred *dinârs*, two *dinârs* for each blow with the whip.[199]

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198 *'Abqariyat 'Umar* by al-'Aqqâd, p. 82; *ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah* by Dr. Ḥamdi Shaheen, p. 138.

199 *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/222.

3.1.6. Regular inspections of the regions

Before he was killed, 'Umar was thinking of travelling around the provinces himself, to check on the governors and see the situation of the people and make sure that the affairs of his vast state were in order. 'Umar said: "If I live, *insha' Allâh*, I will travel among the people for one year, for I know that the people have needs that I do not hear about. Their agents do not tell me about them and they cannot reach me. So I will go to Syria and stay there for two months, then I will go to Mesopotamia and stay there for two months, then I will go to Koofah and stay there for two months, then I will go to Baṣra and stay there for two months, and by Allah, what a good year it will be."[200]

'Umar managed to carry out some of his plan, particularly in Syria, as he went there several times and checked on the situation and entered the houses of the governors and agents[201] to check closely on them. He entered the house of Abu 'Ubaydah and saw how simply he lived, and there took place a discussion between 'Umar and the wife of Abu 'Ubaydah, in which she blamed 'Umar for the simple and ascetic life they were living. He also visited the house of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, where he found that he had nothing that would attract attention except his weapons which he was busy repairing.

When visiting these people, he would make surprise visits. He took with him a man who would knock at the door of the governor and ask for permission for himself and the one who was with him to enter, without telling them that it was 'Umar. When 'Umar entered the house, he would examine it and check on its furnishings.[202]

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[200] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/18; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/161.

[201] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/161.

[202] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/837.

'Umar heard that Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân ate a variety of foods, so he waited until it was the dinner hour, then he asked permission to enter and meet Yazeed. When he saw his food, he told him not to be extravagant with regard to food.[203] 'Umar did not stop at checking on them by means of these visits, rather he used another method, which was sending some wealth to these governors and sending people to watch them and see how they disposed of it. He sent five hundred *dinârs* to Abu 'Ubaydah, and Abu 'Ubaydah distributed the entire amount. His wife used to say: "By Allah, the arrival of *dinârs* did us more harm than good." Abu 'Ubaydah went to a worn-out garment on which we used to pray and cut it into pieces, then he wrapped some of those *dinârs* in each piece and sent it to the poor, until it was all gone.[204]

'Umar did the same thing with other governors during that visit to Syria. He did not only check on his governors during his journey, rather he would also bring them to Madeenah and appoint someone to watch what they ate and drank, and what they wore, and he would also do that himself.[205]

3.1.7. The archive or records of the caliphate

'Umar was extremely keen to preserve the documents pertaining to the governors and to the caliphate in general. He was most concerned with preserving the treaties that the governors had drawn up with the peoples of the conquered lands, lest anyone be wronged. It is narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb had a box or chest in which he kept every treaty that had been drawn up between him and others. We may call this chest the "archive" or records of the

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[203] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/162.

[204] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/837.

[205] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/162.

caliphate. The governors also had chests in which they kept their papers and documents, to refer to them when necessary and so that there would not be any confusion about any matter.[206]

3.2. Complaints from the people about the governors

'Umar (ﷺ) would investigate complaints from the people about the governors himself. He was keen to check matters and he would consult the wise and knowledgeable people around him, then issue his commands to reward or punish those who deserved it, whether they were agents or common folk.[207] There follow some examples of complaints against governors and how 'Umar (ﷺ) dealt with them.

3.2.1. The complaint of the people of Koofah against Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ)

Some of the people of Koofah, led by al-Jarrâḥ ibn Sinân al-Asadi got together and complained to 'Umar about their governor Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ). That happened at a time when the Magians were gathering in Nahawand to attack the Muslims, but this group was not deterred by what was facing the Muslims. Sa'd was just and compassionate towards the people; he was strong and determined against the people of falsehood and the troublemakers, and kind towards the people of truth and obedience. But despite that these people, who could not bear the rule of truth, started to stir up trouble and they wanted to achieve some of their whims and desires.

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[206] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 1/163.

[207] *Al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, 223.

They chose a time to make their complaint when they thought that 'Umar would have no choice but to listen to them, because the Muslims were preparing for a decisive battle which required that there be unity among the Muslims. They knew how deeply concerned 'Umar was for the Muslims to be united at all times, especially in such circumstances, so they hoped they would achieve what they wanted. The caliph responded to their request and investigated their complaint, even though he knew that they were evil people who followed their whims and desires. He did not hide what he thought of them; rather he told them bluntly and explained to them that the fact that he thought they were wronging their governor and making false accusations against him would not stop him from investigating the matter. He proved to them why he thought that their intentions were bad when he said: "The fact that your intentions are bad is proven by your choice of time, when your enemy is mobilizing its forces. By Allah, that will not stop me from investigating your case, even if the enemy attacks you."[208]

'Umar sent Muhammad ibn Maslamah, at the time when the people were preparing to do battle with the Persians and the Persians were preparing to attack the Muslims. Muhammad ibn Maslamah was the one who was appointed to investigate complaints made against agents and governors at the time of 'Umar. Muhammad came to Sa'd and went around Koofah with him, whilst the Muslims were mobilizing to head for Nahawand. Sa'd took him around to the mosques of Koofah, and he did not ask anyone about him secretly, for it was not their habit to conduct investigations in secret at that time.[209] This shows us the method used by the *Ṣaḥâbah* in investigating disputes that arose between people in charge and those who were under them. The investigation was conducted openly, in

[208] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/103.
[209] Ibid.

the presence of the person in charge and those for whom he was responsible. He did not stop at any mosque and ask the people about Sa'd but they said, "We know nothing but good about him and we do not want anyone else (as governor). We will not say anything against him and we will not help anyone against him," except those who were on the side of al-Jarrâḥ ibn Sinân and his companions; they kept quiet and did not say anything bad, because they had no justification for doing so, but they deliberately did not praise him. Then they came to Banu 'Abs. Muhammad said: "I adjure by Allah any man who knows the truth to speak it." Usâmah ibn Qatâdah said, "By Allah, if you adjure us, I would say that he does not divide equally, and he is not just towards the people, and he does not lead us in war." Sa'd said, "By Allah, if he says that he is lying and showing off. May his sight be taken away, may the number of his dependents increase, and may he be exposed to temptation." He went blind, he was given ten daughters, and whenever he heard of any woman he would go to her and pursue her. When he was caught, he said, "The prayer of Sa'd, the blessed man." Then Sa'd began to pray against them, saying: "O' Allah, if they are rebelling out of arrogance and falsely, then strike them with Your calamities." Then they were struck with calamities. Al-Jarrâḥ was killed with the sword on the day when they rebelled against al-Ḥasan ibn 'Ali and tried to assassinate him in Sabâṭ. Qabeesah was struck with rocks and died. Arbad was killed by a blow with a sword handle. This report gives us examples of how Allah supports His pious friends, as He answered the prayer of Sa'd against those who had wronged him and they were all stricken as the result of his *du'â'* against them. It also shows us how Allah's response to the *du'â'* of Sa'd and others like him is a kind of divine care for the pious close friends of Allah. The fact that these people against whom Sa'd prayed met with a bad end indicates that evil was firmly established in their souls, which led them to that bad end. Sa'd defended himself and said: "I was the first man to shed blood among

the *mushrikeen*, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) mentioned both of his parents when he spoke of me, and he had not done so for anyone before me — that was when he said to him on the day of Uḥud: «'Shoot, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you!'» — I remember when I was one of only five in Islam, and Banu Asad are claiming that I do not pray properly or that the hunt has distracted me." Muhammad ibn Maslamah went with him and with them to 'Umar and when they came to him, he told them the story. 'Umar turned to Sa'd and asked: "O' Sa'd, woe to you, how do you pray?" Sa'd said, "I make the first two *rak'ahs* long and the last two *rak'ahs* short." 'Umar said, "That is what I thought." Then 'Umar (ﷺ) said, "Were it not for the need for caution, the way to deal with them would be clear." Then he asked, "Whom do you appoint as your successor in Koofah, O' Sa'd?" He said, " 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abdullâh ibn 'Utbân." 'Umar approved and appointed him as governor.[210]

'Umar's words, "Were it not for the need for caution, the way to deal with them would be clear" mean that they were ignorant wrongdoers, and it was obvious that Sa'd was innocent of what they attributed to him, but caution for the sake of the ummah necessitated warding off *fitnah* and nipping it in the bud, before it got any worse and led to trouble, division and maybe fighting. If the accused person was innocent of what was attributed to him, then nothing would harm him once he had been proven innocent of the accusations against him. They understood governorship as a burden, not an opportunity; it was a duty for which they hoped for reward from Allah. Being appointed in charge of any of the Muslims' affairs is a kind of righteous deed for the one who fears Allah and seeks His pleasure and the Hereafter. If this deed becomes a source of *fitnah*, wisdom dictates that one should not continue in it, as was the case here. This

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210 *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/104.

is what 'Umar did when he relieved Sa'd of his post and appointed his deputy who was trusted by Sa'd.[211] 'Umar kept Sa'd in Madeenah and approved of the man whom Sa'd nominated to succeed him in Koofah. Thus Sa'd became one of 'Umar's consultants in Madeenah.[212] Then he nominated him as one of the six candidates for the caliphate when he was stabbed, and he urged the caliph who succeeded him to appoint Sa'd as a governor, and said: "I did not dismiss him for something bad, but I feared that his reputation might be tarnished because of that."[213]

3.2.2. Complaints against 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, the governor of Egypt

'Umar kept a strict watch on 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, and the caliph intervened in the affairs of the province on occasion. When 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ had a *minbar* made for himself, he wrote to him, saying: "I have heard that you have acquired a *minbar* to raise yourself above the heads of the Muslims. Is it not sufficient for you that you stand with the Muslims at your feet? I insist that you should break it."[214]

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ feared 'Umar's checking on him. He knew how keen 'Umar was that justice should be established among the people, and that the limits set by shari'ah be adhered to, so he did his utmost to ensure that no news reached 'Umar but that which would please him. An example of that occurred when 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and another man drank something without realizing that it was an intoxicant, and they became intoxicated. Then they came to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ and asked him to carry out the *ḥadd*

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[211] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi* by al-Ḥumaydi, 11/222.

[212] *Dawr al-Ḥijâz fee al-Ḥayât as-Siyâsiyah*, p. 257.

[213] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/225.

[214] *Futooḥ Miṣr wa Akhbâruhâ*, p. 92.

punishment on them. 'Amr rebuked them and threw them out, and 'Abdur-Raḥmân said to him: "If you do not do it, I will tell my father!" 'Amr said, "I realized that if I did not carry out the *ḥadd* punishment on them, 'Umar would be angry and would dismiss me." Then 'Amr flogged them in front of the people, but he shaved their heads inside his house, and the usual procedure was to shave the head at the same time as flogging, in front of the people. Then he received a letter from 'Umar, rebuking him for not shaving their heads in front of the people, in which he said: "You flogged 'Abdur-Raḥmân inside your house and you shaved his head inside your house, although you knew that this was against my wishes! 'Abdur-Raḥmân is one of the men under your authority, and you should treat him as you would treat any other Muslim. But you said, he is the son of the caliph, although you know that I do not compromise for anyone with regard to a duty that is owed to Allah."[215]

Other complaints were also made against 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ during his governorship; some of them came from his Muslim troops, and some came from the Egyptians, which led 'Umar to summon 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ on several occasions, to rebuke him and sometimes to punish him for what he had done. An example of that was when one of the Egyptians complained that a son of 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ had struck him with a whip, which led 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb to summon 'Amr and his son. He then commanded the Egyptian to settle the score with the son of 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, and he said to him: "If you had hit his father 'Amr, we would not have stopped you." Then 'Umar turned to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ and spoke his famous words: "When did you enslave people whose mothers bore them free?"[216]

Another incident which comes under this heading was when one of the soldiers complained about 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ who had

[215] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/841.

[216] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 1/81.

accused him of hypocrisy. 'Umar sent a letter ordering that 'Amr should be made to sit before the people and be whipped by this man if the testimony of witnesses proved that what this soldier said was true. The soldier's complaint was proven by testimony, that 'Amr had accused him of being a hypocrite. The people tried to stop the soldier from hitting 'Amr, and to accept money in compensation instead, but he refused that. When the man stood by 'Amr to hit him he said, "Is there anyone who will stop me from hitting you?" 'Amr said, "No, go ahead with what you have been commanded to do." He said, "I let you off."[217]

3.2.3. Complaints against Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari, the governor of Baṣra

It was narrated from Jareer ibn 'Abdullâh al-Bajali that a man who had a loud voice and was very tough with the enemy in battle was with Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari. They got some booty and Abu Moosa gave him part of his share, but he insisted on having it all. Abu Moosa gave him twenty lashes and shaved his head. The man gathered up his hair and went to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, and entered to meet him. Jareer said: "I was the closest of the people to 'Umar. He took out his hair and threw it at 'Umar's chest, then he said, "Were it not for the Hellfire." 'Umar said, "That's right, were it not for the Hellfire." He said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I had a loud voice and I was very tough with the enemy in battle," and he told him his story. He then said, "Abu Moosa gave me twenty lashes and shaved my head, and he thinks that no one can settle the score with him." 'Umar (ﷺ) said, "If all the people were as firm as this man, that would be dearer to me than all the booty that Allah has granted us. 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa saying: "Peace be upon you. So and so has told me

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[217] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/807, 808; there is some interruption in its isnad.

such and such. If you did that before a group of people, then I urge you to sit before a group of people so that he may settle the score with you. If you did that with no people around, then I urge you to sit where there are no people around and let him settle the score with you." The man came, and the people said to him, "Let him off." He said, "No, by Allah, I would not let him off for the sake of any man." When Abu Moosa sat for him to settle the score, the man raised his head and looked up at the heavens, then he said, "O' Allah, I have let him off."[218]

It was narrated that 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar (ﷺ) said: "We were with 'Umar on a journey when he saw a man rushing. He said, 'This man is looking for us.' The man came and wept, and 'Umar wept, and asked, 'What is the matter with you?' He said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I drank alcohol, and Abu Moosa hit me and blackened my face and paraded me before the people, and told the people not to sit with me. I thought of taking my sword and striking Abu Moosa with it, or of coming to you and asking you to send me to a land where I am not known, or of going to live in the land of *shirk*.' 'Umar wept and said, 'I would not like you to go and live in the land of *shirk*, even if I have such and such in return.' And he said, 'If you are one of those who drank alcohol, then the people drank alcohol during the *Jâhiliyah*.' Then 'Umar wrote to Abu Moosa, saying, 'So and so came to me and told me such and such. When this letter of mine reaches you, tell the people to sit with him and to mix with him. If he repents, then accept his testimony.' And he gave him some clothes and ordered that he be given two hundred *dirhams*.[219] According to another report, he said, 'So and so the son of So and so from Banu Tameem has told me such and such. By Allah, if you do that again I will certainly blacken your face and parade you before the people. If

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[218] *Mahḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/467, its isnad is *ḥasan*.
[219] *Mahḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/553.

you want to know whether I mean what I say, then do it again. And tell the people to eat with him and sit with him, and if he repents then accept his testimony.' And 'Umar gave him a suit of clothes and a mount, and gave him two hundred *dirhams*."[220] This story shows us how keen 'Umar was that none of his governors should overstep the mark in carrying out *ḥadd* punishments on sinners.[221]

3.2.4. The complaints of the people of Homs against Sa'eed ibn 'Âmir

Khâlid ibn Ma'dân said: 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb appointed Sa'eed ibn 'Âmir al-Jumaḥi over us in Homs. When 'Umar came to Homs he said: "O' people of Homs, how do you find your governor?" and they complained about him. The people of Homs were known as "the little Koofah" because of their complaints about their governors. They said: "We have four complaints about him. He does not come out to us until late in the day." He said, "This is a serious matter. What else?" They said, "He does not respond to anyone at night." He said, "This is a serious matter. What else?" They said, "There is one day in the month when he does not come out to us." He said, "This is a serious matter. What else?" They said: "Sometimes he passes out." 'Umar gathered them and him together and said, "O' Allah, do not prove me wrong in my view of him this day," then he began to judge the matter. He asked them in front of him, "What is your complaint against him?" They said, "He does not come out to us until the late in the day." 'Umar asked, "What do you say?" Sa'eed said, "By Allah, I did not want to mention it. My family has no servant, so I make dough and wait for it to rise, then I bake my

[220] *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerah wa Ḥayât al-Fârooq*, p. 134, its isnad is *ḥasan*.

[221] Ibid, p. 133.

bread, then I do *wudoo'*, then come out to them." 'Umar asked, "What is your complaint against him?" They said, "He does nor respond to anyone at night." 'Umar asked, "What do you say?" Sa'eed said, "By Allah, I did not want to mention it. I have set aside the day for them and the night for Allah." 'Umar then asked, "What is your complaint against him?" They said, "There is one day in the month when he does not come out to us." 'Umar asked, "What do you say?" Sa'eed said, "I have no servant to wash my garment for me and I have no garment other than this, so I wait for it to dry, then I put it on and come out to them at the end of the day." 'Umar asked, "What is your complaint against him?" They said, "Sometimes he passes out." 'Umar asked, "What do you say?" Sa'eed said, "I witnessed the killing of Khubayb al-Ansâri in Makkah when Quraysh cut his flesh and tied him to a tree trunk and said, 'Would you like Muhammad to be in your place?' He said, 'By Allah, I would not like to be with my family and my children and see Muhammad pricked by a thorn.' Then he called out, 'O' Muhammad!' Whenever I remember that day and how I failed to help him at that time, when I was a *mushrik* and did not believe in Allah the Almighty, I think that Allah will never forgive me for that sin. Then I pass out." 'Umar said, "Praise be to Allah Who has not proved my instinct wrong." He sent him with a thousand dinars and said, "Use it to help yourself," and he Sa'eed distributed it.[222]

3.2.5. Dismissal of an agent who made fun of one of the people

Qays ibn Abi Hâzim (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated: " 'Umar employed a man of the Ansâr who stayed with the leader of the people of al-Heerah, 'Amr ibn Hayyân ibn Baqeelah. He brought

[222] *Hilyah al-Awliya'*, 1/245; *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 152.

him food and drink and whatever he wanted, then he (the Anṣâri) started to joke a great deal. He called him and wiped his hand on his beard. Then 'Amr ibn Ḥayyân went to 'Umar and said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen,* I served Chosroes and Caesar and I was never intimidated in the manner in which I was intimidated under your reign." 'Umar asked, "How is that?" He said, "Your agent stayed with me and we brought him food and drink and whatever he wanted, then he started to joke a great deal. He called me and wiped his hand on my beard. 'Umar sent for him and said, "What is this? He brought you food and drink and whatever you wanted, then you called him and wiped your hand on his beard? By Allah, were it not that I do not want to set a precedent, I would have left a single hair of your beard without pulling it out. Now go, for by Allah you will never do any work for me."[223]

3.3. Punishments that were carried out on governors at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ)

As a result of 'Umar's watching his governors, he noticed some mistakes that the governors made, so he disciplined and punished them for these mistakes. His methods of disciplining the governors varied according to the situation and what the caliph thought best. Among the most important methods he used were the following:

3.3.1. Settling scores with governors when they erred

'Umar used to say: "I have not sent my governors to beat you or to take your wealth, rather I have sent them to you to teach you

[223] *Târeekh al-Madeenah,* 3/813; a *ṣaḥeeḥ* report; *al-Fârooq al-Ḥâkim al-'Âdil,* p. 11.

your religion and Sunnah. Whoever is treated differently than that, let him refer it to me, for by the One in Whose hand is my soul, I will settle the score for him."[224] *'Umar did not stop at official* announcements which warned the governors against aggression towards the people, rather he put that into practice, as we have seen above, when complaints were made against Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari and 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ (may Allah be pleased with them both).[225]

3.3.2. Dismissing a governor as a result of his error

'Umar dismissed governors as a result of their falling into errors of which he did not approve. He dismissed one of his governors when he interfered in matters that did not concern him with regard to his troops. He was sent to lead an army, then when he reached them he said: "I want you to tell me of every sin that you commit." So they started to confess their sins to him. News of that reached 'Umar and he said: "What is wrong with him, may he be doomed, that he goes and uncovers that which Allah had concealed? By Allah, he will never work for me again."[226]

'Umar also got angry with one of his governors when he heard some of his poetry in which he mentioned wine, so he dismissed him.[227]

3.3.3. Destroying part of the governors' dwellings

This was done in case where there was some transgression. 'Umar was keen that the governors' houses should be without gates

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[224] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/127; *al-Amwâl* by Abu Salâm, Pp. 63, 64.

[225] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/126, 127.

[226] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/818.

[227] *As-Siyâsah ash-Shar'iyyah* by Ibn Taymiyah, p. 105.

and gatekeepers. When he heard that Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) had put a gate on his house, he sent Muhammad ibn Maslamah to him and told him to burn that gate.[228] The reason for that gate was that the market was close to his house, and the loud voices in the market were disturbing Sa'd, so he put a gate to block the noise of the people in the market. News of Sa'd's house and its gate reached 'Umar, and he heard that people were calling it Sa'd's palace. So he called Muhammad ibn Maslamah and sent him to Koofah. He said: "Go to the palace and burn its gate, then come back straight away." So he went to Koofah, where he bought some firewood, took it to the palace and burned the gate.[229]

Ibn Shibh narrated that 'Umar appointed Mujâsha' ibn Mas'ood in charge of some work, and he heard that his wife kept buying new furnishings. 'Umar wrote to him and said: "From the slave of Allah, the Commander of the Faithful, to Mujâsha' ibn Mas'ood. Peace be upon you. I have heard that al-Khuḍayra' keeps buying new furnishings. When this letter of mine reaches you, I urge you not to put it down until you have torn down her wall hangings." The letter reached him when there were some people sitting with him. He looked at the letter, and the people realized that something upsetting had come to him. He took the letter in his hand then he said to the people: "Get up!" So they got up, and by Allah they did not know why he was making them get up. He took them to the door of his house, then he went in and was met by his wife, who could see something bad in his expression. She asked him, "What is the matter with you?" He said, "Go away! I am angry with you." So the woman went away and he said to the people, "Come in." The people went in and he said, "Let each one of you take what is nearest to him in this direction, and tear it down." So they all tore it down and threw it on

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[228] *Futooḥ al-Buldân*, p. 77; *Nihâyat al-Irb*, 19/8.

[229] *Al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah* by Majdlâwi, p. 216.

the ground, and the letter was still in his hand; he had not put it down yet.

When 'Umar visited Syria, Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân invited him to come and eat with him. When 'Umar entered the house, he saw some wallhangings. 'Umar started to tear them up, saying, "Woe to you, do you dress walls with material that could be used by people to shield themselves from the heat and cold?"[230]

3.3.4. Disciplining by hitting

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) used this method and was famous for carrying his stick with which he struck people. He struck some of the governors because of some deeds that they committed. During 'Umar's visit to Syria, he entered the house of one of his governors and found that they had too many possessions. 'Umar got angry and started hitting them with his stick.[231] Also during 'Umar's visit to Syria, some of the governors came to meet him. The first ones who met him were Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân and Abu 'Ubaydah, then Khâlid, who came riding horses and wearing fine garments, that did not befit the *Mujâhideen*. 'Umar dismounted, picked up some stones and started throwing them at them, and said, "How quickly you have changed your ways! Are you receiving me in this manner? It is only two years ago that you started having your fill. By Allah even if you were to do this after two hundred years I would still replace you with someone else!" They said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, this is just outward appearance; we still have our weapons on us." He said, "Fine, then."[232]

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[230] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/832; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/128.

[231] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/129.

[232] Ibid.

3.3.5. Demoting a governor to a shepherd

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb used this method with one of his governors. Ibn Shibh narrated that 'Umar (ﷺ) appointed 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam as governor of Syria, then he heard that he had acquired a *ḥamâm* (bath) and chose an inner circle. He wrote to him, telling to come to him. He came and 'Umar refused to meet him for three days, then he gave him permission to enter. He called for a woollen *jubbah* and said to him, "Put this on." And he gave him a shepherd's bag and three hundred sheep and said, "Call them." So he called them, and when he had gone some distance, he said, "Come back." So he came back running. He said, "Do such and such, go," and he went, then when he had gone far away, he called out to him, "O' 'Iyâḍ, come back." He kept sending him away and calling him back until he started to sweat in that *jubbah*. He said, "Bring the sheep to me on such and such a day." He brought them to him on that day and 'Umar came out and said, "Draw water for them." So he drew water and filled the trough and gave them water. Then he said, "Call them, and bring them on such and such a day." He kept doing that until two or three months had passed, then he called him and said, "So, you chose an inner circle and acquired a *ḥamâm*! Will you do it again?" He said, "No." 'Umar said: "Go back to your job."[233] The result of this disciplinary punishment is that after that, 'Iyâḍ became one of the best of 'Umar's governors.[234]

3.3.6. Taking away some of the governors' wealth

This measure was applied as a precautionary measure at the time of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, when 'Umar felt that the wealth of some of the governors was increasing too much, and he feared that

[233] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/817, 818; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/130.
[234] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/130.

the governors had acquired some of this wealth because of their position.[235] Ibn Taymiyah commented on this action of 'Umar's and said: "Similarly, showing favour to the governors in buying, renting, investments, irrigation, farming and so on is a kind of gift-giving, hence 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) took away part of the wealth of his governors in cases where there was no room for suspicion of misconduct because of their high level of virtue and religious commitment. The reason why he did that was that it was a favour that was shown to them because of their position, and because this is what was dictated by the situation, because he was a just ruler who shared out wealth equally.[236] Among the governors from whom 'Umar took some of their wealth were: Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, Abu Hurayrah and 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ (may Allah be pleased with them all). 'Umar would record his governors' wealth when he appointed them, then he would take half of any increase, and in some cases he took all of the increase."[237]

He also took away some of the wealth of some of the governors' relatives, if he thought that that was justified. He took half of Abu Bakrah's wealth, and Abu Bakrah objected, saying: "I did not do any work for you." 'Umar said, "But your brother is in charge of the *bayt al-mâl*, and he has been lending you money with which to engage in trade."[238]

3.3.7. Verbal and written rebukes

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) rebuked some of his governors for their conduct when they met with him. He rebuked 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ

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[235] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 2/130.

[236] *Al-Fatâwa,* 28/157.

[237] *Futooḥ al-Buldân,* Pp. 220, 221; *al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân,* 2/131.

[238] *Shaheed al-Miḥrâb,* p. 250.

on several occasions, and he rebuked 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari and other governors.[239]

There were also many written rebukes during the time of 'Umar, such as when 'Umar wrote to one of his governors when some people had come to him, and he had given to the Arabs and not to the non-Arabs. 'Umar wrote: "It is sufficient evil for a man to despise his fellow-Muslim."[240]

From all of this we can see that the governors were not safe from being called to account and disciplined in different ways. Mankind had never seen anything like this in terms of justice and courage, which made the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs a fine example of Islamic civilization, after the era of the Prophet (ﷺ).[241]

Freedom of discussion between the caliph and his governors was guaranteed to a remarkable extent. The governors did not fear the authority of the caliph. There follow some examples of that:

When 'Umar came to Syria, he was met by Mu'âwiyah with a great entourage. When Mu'âwiyah saw 'Umar, he dismounted from his horse and walked up to him and said, "Peace be upon the Commander of the Faithful." 'Umar walked on and did not return his greeting, and Mu'âwiyah ran behind 'Umar's camel; he was a fat man and he started panting. 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you have worn the man out. Why don't you speak to him?" 'Umar turned to him and said, "O' Mu'âwiyah, are you the owner of the entourage that I see?" He said, "Yes, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*." 'Umar said, "And in addition to that you keep away from the people and those who are in need stand waiting at your

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[239] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/131.

[240] *Futooḥ al-Buldân*, p. 443.

[241] *Al-Wilâyah 'ala al-Buldân*, 2/133.

door?" Mu'âwiyah said: "Yes, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen.*" He said, "Why is that, woe to you?" Mu'âwiyah said, "Because we are in a land where the enemy has many spies, and if we do not take precautions the enemy will no longer fear us and they will attack us. As for the doorkeeper, we are afraid that we will lose respect and the people will become audacious. I am still your agent, and if you forbid me to do that, I will stop, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen.*" 'Umar said, "Whatever I ask you, you have an answer. If you are telling the truth, it is a smart idea, and if you are lying, it is a smart and subtle trick. I am not commanding you and I am not forbidding you." And he left him.[242]

Despite 'Umar's strictness with his governors and his careful watching of them, and his readiness to dismiss any of them of whom he was suspicious or about whom he received well-founded complaints, there was a strong bond of love and loyalty between them. They had complete faith in their caliph's sincerity, soundness of intention, policies and justice. If 'Umar lost contact with any of his leaders in the arena of jihad, the worry would almost kill him, and he would be overwhelmed with fear and concern for them. During one of the major wars, he went out himself to try and find news and put his mind at rest. In other cases he met them and we see signs of the deep love that existed between them. When 'Umar went to conquer Jerusalem, he reached al-Jâbiyah where he met his commanders 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ and Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah. 'Umar met them riding, and they kissed his knees and 'Umar hugged each one of them.[243]

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[242] *Al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by ash-Sharqâwi, p. 287.

[243] *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 151.

3.4. The dismissal of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed (ﷺ)

The enemies of Islam have a vivid imagination and intense hatred which enables them to hunt out reports which show the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in a bad light. If they cannot find any reports that please them, they fabricate reports that they think the people will accept, so that they may become a source for narrators and authors. Both 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and Khâlid ibn al-Waleed have been exposed to the fabrications of the enemies of Islam who have tried to distort the historical record. They paid a great deal of attention to the reasons why 'Umar dismissed Khâlid ibn al-Waleed (may Allah be pleased with them both) and they made false accusations against these two great men and fabricated reports which do not stand up to close scrutiny.[244] There follows the true story of the dismissal of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, which took place in two stages, and for which there were objective reasons.

3.4.1. The first dismissal

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) dismissed Khâlid ibn al-Waleed for the first time from general leadership and governorship in Syria. This happened in 13 A.H., when 'Umar succeeded to the caliphate after the death of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq. The reason for this dismissal was the difference in the way Abu Bakr and 'Umar dealt with their agents and governors. Abu Bakr's method of dealing with his governors and agents was to give them complete freedom within the framework of the general system of the state, subject to the condition that they be completely just and fair between individuals and groups. He did not mind whether he himself made sure justice was done or his governors did that. The governor had the right, based on the

[244] *Abâṭeel yajib an tumḥa min at-Târeekh*, by Ibrâheem Sha'ooṭ, p. 123.

consent of the caliph, to run the affairs of his province without referring every minor issue to the caliph. Abu Bakr did not see any need to undermine the authority of his governors with regard to wealth or anything else, so long as justice prevailed in their provinces.[245] 'Umar advised Abu Bakr to write to Khâlid telling him not to give anyone a sheep or a camel except by his command. Abu Bakr wrote to Khâlid as suggested, and Khâlid wrote back to him saying, "Leave me alone to do my work my way, otherwise you should do it yourself." 'Umar suggested that he dismiss him[246], but Abu Bakr left Khâlid in his post.[247] When 'Umar became caliph, he thought that the caliph should set out for his governors and agents guidelines on how to govern their provinces, and make it obligatory for them to report to him everything that happened, so that he could examine the matter and issue commands accordingly, and they would be obliged to carry out his commands. That was because he thought that the caliph was responsible for what he did and for what his governors did, and that this responsibility was not discharged even by selecting the best governors. When he became caliph, he addressed the people and said: "Allah is testing you by means of me and is testing me by means of you, and he has kept me alive after my two companions are gone. None of your affairs that I witness will I let anyone else deal with, and none of your affairs that I do not witness but I will strive hard to ensure that they are dealt with. If the governors do well, I shall reward them, but if they do badly, I shall punish them."[248] And he used to say: "Do you think that if I appoint over you the best one I know, then I enjoin him to be just, will I have fulfilled my duty?" They said, "Yes." He said, "No, not until I

[245] *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed,* by Ṣâdiq 'Arjoon, Pp. 321-331.

[246] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/115.

[247] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/146.

[248] *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed* by Ṣâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 331.

examine his work and see whether he has done what I commanded him or not."[249]

When 'Umar became caliph, he wanted the governors to change to his methods. Some of them agreed and others refused, and among those who refused was Khâlid ibn al-Waleed.[250] It was narrated from Mâlik ibn Anas that when 'Umar became caliph, he wrote to Khâlid saying: "Do not give anyone a sheep or a camel except by my command." Khâlid write back to him saying, "Either you leave me to do my job, or you will do it yourself." 'Umar said, "I would not be sincere towards Allah if I advised Abu Bakr to do something then I did not implement it myself." And he dismissed him.[251] Moreover he would call upon him to do things and he would refuse unless he was given free rein to do what he wanted, but 'Umar refused to allow him that.[252]

So 'Umar dismissed Khâlid on the basis of his policy of rule and the ruler's right to direct the affairs of state and his responsibility for the state. Things like this happen naturally in everyday life, and there is nothing strange about this case that would require us to try to find an explanation based on reports, opinions, whims and desires, and different inclinations. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb was the caliph of the Muslims at a time when people were still close to the time of Prophethood, and one of his basic rights was the right to choose governors and commanders who were in harmony with him and his policies and method of ruling, to work with him, so long as the ummah had plenty of qualified people. The governors and commanders did not have the right to remain in their posts forever,

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[249] Op. cit., p. 332.

[250] Ibid.

[251] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/115.

[252] *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed* by Ṣâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 332.

especially when there were political differences between the ruler and the governors, so long as there were others who could replace them and do the same job. History shows us that 'Umar (ﷺ) was very successful in this regard, and this policy of his met with unprecedented success. He dismissed some and appointed others, and the ones whom he appointed were no less qualified than those whom he dismissed, the reason being that there was a large number of people who were courageous and qualified to do this type of work.[253] Khâlid accepted this dismissal without objecting, and he remained under the command of Abu 'Ubaydah (ﷺ), until Allah enabled him to conquer Qinnisreen, where Abu 'Ubaydah appointed him as governor. He wrote to 'Umar describing the conquest and Khâlid's efforts therein, and 'Umar spoke his famous words: "Khâlid has appointed himself. May Allah have mercy on Abu Bakr, he had more knowledge of men than me."[254] What 'Umar meant by this was that Khâlid, because of his courage and heroic actions, had put himself in a position that he was used to, one of danger, courage and taking risks. It is as if 'Umar meant by this that Abu Bakr, by keeping Khâlid and not agreeing to dismiss him despite 'Umar's urging, had had great confidence in Khâlid's ability and military genius, which meant that no one else could fill his position except a very few of the most brilliant heroes.[255]

At this point, Khâlid had been working under the leadership of Abu 'Ubaydah for nearly four years, and he did not go against him even once. The virtue of Abu 'Ubaydah cannot be denied, for he realized the impact that this incident had on Khâlid, so he treated him with a great deal of respect and kindness. He kept company with him, frequently consulting him and respecting his opinion, and sometimes

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[253] *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed* by Ṣâdiq 'Arjoon, Pp. 332, 333.

[254] Ibid, p. 321.

[255] Ibid.

placing him in positions of leadership. All of this had an impact in leaving Khâlid's heart free of rancour, which led him to perform those heroic military deeds. His efforts in the conquests of Damascus, Qinnisreen and Faḥl bore witness to the noble spirit in which he reacted to his dismissal. In both cases (i.e., before and after his dismissal) he was the Sword of Allah, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed (may Allah be pleased with him).[256]

History has recorded for us what Abu 'Ubaydah said when he consoled Khâlid at the time of his dismissal: "It is not worldly power that I seek and it is not for this world that I strive. What you see will cease and come to an end. Rather we are brothers who are fulfilling the command of Allah, and it doesn't matter if a man has his brother in charge of his religious and worldly affairs. Rather the one who is in charge knows that he is more vulnerable to temptations and sin because he is in a vulnerable position, except for those whom Allah protects, and they are few."[257]

When Abu 'Ubaydah asked Khâlid to carry out a military mission under his command, Khâlid accepted, saying: "I will do it, *insha' Allâh*. I was only waiting for you to tell me." Abu 'Ubaydah said, "I felt too shy to ask you, O' Abu Sulaymân." Khâlid said, "By Allah, if a little child had been appointed over me, I would have obeyed him. How can I go against you when you came to Islam before me and you came to Islam with those who hastened to enter the Faith, and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) called you *al-Ameen* (the trustworthy one)? How can I catch up with you and achieve your status? Now I ask you to bear witness that I devote myself solely for the sake of Allah and I will never disobey you or accept any position of governorship after this." Khâlid did not stop there; rather he

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[256] *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed* by Ṣâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 346.

[257] Ibid, p. 323.

followed his words with actions, and immediately went and carried out the mission that was asked of him.[258]

It is clear from Khâlid's words and actions that religious and moral motives played a major role in the actions of Khâlid and Abu 'Ubaydah (may Allah be pleased with them both). Khâlid adhered to the principle of obedience to the caliph and the governor, despite the fact that his personal situation had changed from that of leader to that of follower, because of his dismissal from leadership of the army.[259] The dismissal of Khâlid on this occasion (the first) was not because the caliph had any doubts about him or bore any grudges against him, or because he had transgressed the sacred limits of shari'ah, or because any aspersions had been cast on Khâlid's piety and justice, But there were two different methods adopted by two great men, two powerful personalities, each of whom thought it was essential to implement his own method. If one of them had to give in, the leader of the army had to give in to the caliph, without being stubborn or bearing any grudge or resentment.[260]

By the guidance of Allah, 'Umar appointed Abu 'Ubaydah as commander of the army in Syria, which after the battle of Yarmook was an area which needed peace, so that grudges would end, wounds would heal and hearts would be reconciled. Abu 'Ubaydah (ﷺ) hastened to make peace when the opportunity was there, but he did not shy away from war when it was necessary. If there was a way for peace, that is the way he would follow, otherwise he would prepare for war. The people of the cities in Syria had heard of Abu 'Ubaydah's forbearance, so they came to surrender to him; they preferred to deal with him than with anyone else. Abu 'Ubaydah's appointment was by 'Umar's instruction, and his governorship of

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[258] *Nidhâm al-Hukm fee 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, 84.

[259] Ibid.

[260] *Abâṭeel Yajib an Tumḥa min at-Târeekh*, p. 132.

Syria at that point was in the province's best interests.[261]

3.4.2. The second dismissal

The second dismissal of Khâlid came in Qinnisreen in 17 A.H.[262] News reached 'Umar that Khâlid and 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam had penetrated into Byzantine territory and had come back with a great amount of booty, and that men had come to Khâlid from far and wide, hoping for his generosity, including al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindi, to whom Khâlid gave ten thousand. Nothing was hidden from 'Umar of what he did.[263] 'Umar wrote to his commander, Abu 'Ubaydah, ordering him to investigate the source of the wealth from which he had given al-Ash'ath this huge sum, and to dismiss him from working with the army at all. He summoned Khâlid to Madeenah and questioned him in the presence of Abu 'Ubaydah. In the end, Khâlid was proven innocent of taking ten thousand from the booty of the Muslims.[264] When Khâlid was told of his dismissal, he bade farewell to the people of Syria. The most that he allowed himself to show of the sorrow that he felt at this separation of a commander and his troops was when he said to the people: "The *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* appointed me as governor in Syria until things started to become smooth and sweet, then he dismissed me." A man stood up and said, "Be patient, O' commander, for it is the time for *fitnah*." Khâlid said, "So long as the son of al-Khaṭṭâb is alive, there is no room for *fitnah*."[265] This is a powerful and overwhelming kind of faith, with which none were blessed accept the chosen ones among the closest Companions of Muhammad (ﷺ). What spiritual strength controlled

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[261] *'Abqariyat Khâlid* by al-'Aqqâd. Pp. 154, 155, 156.

[262] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/41.

[263] Ibid, 5/42.

[264] *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed*, by Ṣâdiq al-'Arjoon, p. 324.

[265] Ibid, p. 347; *al-Kâmil fee at-Târeekh*, 2/156.

Khâlid's nerves during this grave situation, what inspired Khâlid to give this quiet and wise answer?[266] The people calmed down after they heard what Khâlid said in support of 'Umar's caliphate. They realized that their dismissed leader was not the type of man who would build his glory by stirring up tribalation and revolution, rather he was one of those men who are created to play a constructive role, and if circumstances want them to destroy what they have built, they rise above that.[267]

Khâlid travelled to Madeenah, where he met 'Umar. Khâlid said to 'Umar: "I complained about you to the Muslims, and by Allah you are not being kind to me, O' 'Umar." 'Umar asked, "From where did this wealth come?" He said, "From my share of the booty. Whatever is more than sixty thousand is yours." 'Umar estimated the wealth and found it to be twenty thousand, which he put into the *bayt al-mâl*, then he said, "O' Khâlid, by Allah you are dear to me and you will not be upset with me after today."[268] 'Umar wrote to the regions, saying: "I did not dismiss Khâlid because I was angry with him or because of any misconduct on his part; rather the people were too attached to him and I feared that Allah would leave them to him and they would be tested because of him. I wanted them to know that Allah is the One Who brings victory, so that they would not be confused about this fact."

3.4.3. Summary of the reasons for the dismissal and some of its benefits

Based on the way in which 'Umar conducted his affairs, we can sum up the reasons for Khâlid's dismissal as follows:

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[266] *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed*, by Ṣâdiq al-'Arjoon, p. 347.

[267] Ibid.

[268] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/43.

Protection of Tawḥeed

From 'Umar's words, "rather the people were too attached to him and I feared that they would be left to him and they would be tested because of him" it is clear that 'Umar feared that the people would become confused because of Khâlid and they would think that victory came wherever Khâlid went, which would weaken their certain faith that victory comes from Allah whether Khâlid was at the head of the army or not. Too much attachment to a great commander like Khâlid would also lead Khâlid himself to become attached to his followers, and he might think himself in a position of power which could not be challenged, especially since he was brilliant in war and generous with money. That could lead to bad consequences for him and for the state. Even though it may have been a far-fetched possibility, given the fact that the people were attached to their caliph 'Umar and felt great admiration for him, and Khâlid was a man of great military discipline and piety, it could, however, happen one day after 'Umar was gone, even with a leader such as Khâlid. This required setting up guidelines at that time and with great people such as these.[269] In such a situation the fear is greater with regard to a competent commander than a lesser commander who has no such image or reputation.[270]

Differences concerning how money is to be spent

'Umar thought that the time for softening hearts and attracting the weak in faith with money and gifts had come to an end; Islam no longer needed these people, and the people could be left to their own faith and conscience. Khâlid, on the other hand, thought that some of those courageous men and *Mujâhideen* who were fighting alongside

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[269] *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, by Ḥamdi Shaheen, p. 149.

[270] *'Abqariyat 'Umar*, p. 158.

him were men whose intention was not purely to seek the reward of Allah, and that men such as these needed some of this wealth to strengthen their resolve and motivate them further.[271] 'Umar thought that the poor of the *Muhâjireen* were more entitled to this wealth than others. When he told the people in al-Jâbiyah of his reasons for dismissing Khâlid, he said: "I told him to keep this money to be spent on the weak ones among the *Muhâjireen*, but he gave it to men of power and strength."[272] Undoubtedly 'Umar and Khâlid both had strong arguments for their opinions, but 'Umar understood some things that Khâlid did not.[273]

Difference between the methods of 'Umar and Khâlid in administrative issues

'Umar insisted that his governors should ask his permission for every matter, major or minor, whereas as Khâlid thought that he was entitled to complete freedom with no need to refer to anyone else in the field of jihad; he thought that he should be given free rein to do whatever he saw fit, on the grounds that the one who is present sees what the one who is absent does not.[274]

Perhaps another reason was to allow room for new leadership talent to grow, so that the Muslim ummah could produce more heroes of the calibre of Khâlid, al-Muthanna and 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ. Another aim was to make the people realize that victory was not tied to a single man[275], no matter who this man was.

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271 *Abâṭeel Yajib an Tumha min at-Târeekh*, p. 134.

272 *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/115.

273 *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/147.

274 *Al-Khilâfah wa al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon* by Sâlim al-Bahnasâwi, p. 196.

275 *Abâteel Yajib an Tumha min at-Târeekh*, p. 134.

The attitude of the Muslim society towards this dismissal

The Muslim society accepted this dismissal as the right of the caliph to appoint and dismiss his governors. No one had the right to rebel against the system or reject the right of the caliph to appoint and dismiss his governors.

It was narrated that 'Umar went out in the middle of the night and met 'Alqamah ibn 'Ulâthah al-Kilâbi. 'Umar resembled Khâlid to a remarkable extent and 'Alqamah thought that he was Khâlid. He said, "O' Khâlid, this man has dismissed you and has insisted on being mean. I came with a cousin of mine to ask him something, but because he did what he did, I will never ask him anything." 'Umar said to him — trying to find out what he was hiding — "Well, tell me more." He said, "These people have rights over us and we have to give them their rights, and Allah will reward us." The next morning, 'Umar asked Khâlid — when 'Alqamah was looking at both of them — "What did 'Alqamah say to you last night?" Khâlid said, "By Allah, he did not say anything." 'Umar then asked, "Are you swearing to that?" 'Alqamah got upset and thought that he had not spoken to anyone the night before but Khâlid, and he started to say, "Come on, O' Khâlid." 'Umar was generous to 'Alqamah and met his need, and he said, "If there were more people out there who think like you — i.e., were keen to obey the ruler even when they disagree with him — that would be dearer to me than such and such."[276]

However an objection came from Abu 'Amr ibn Ḥafṣ ibn al-Mugheerah, the cousin of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, at al-Jâbiyah. When 'Umar said to the people: "I will tell you the reason why (I dismissed) Khâlid ibn al-Waleed; I ordered him to keep this wealth for the weak ones among the *Muhâjireen,* but he gave it to men of power and strength, those who were of high status and eloquent. So I dismissed

[276] *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 151.

him and appointed Abu 'Ubaydah ibn Jarrâḥ," Abu 'Amr ibn Ḥafṣ ibn al-Mugheerah said, "By Allah, you have not justified it, O' 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. You have dismissed a commander who was appointed by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and you have sheathed a sword that was unsheathed by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and you have taken down a banner that was set up by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). You have severed the ties of kinship and shown jealousy towards your cousin." 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb said, "You are closely related to him, and young in age, and angry for the sake of your cousin."[277] Thus 'Umar showed tolerance to the cousin of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed who was defending Khâlid to such an extent that he accused 'Umar of jealousy (*ḥasad*). But despite that, 'Umar remained patient.[278]

The death of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and what he said about 'Umar when he was on his deathbed

Abu ad-Dardâ' went to see Khâlid during his final illness and Khâlid said to him: "O' Abu ad-Dardâ', when 'Umar dies, you will see things that you dislike." Abu ad-Dardâ' said to him, "By Allah, I agree with you." Khâlid said, "I got upset with him for a certain issue, but when I thought about it when I got sick and felt that death is at hand, I realized that 'Umar seeks to please Allah in all that he does. I got upset with him when he sent someone to take half of my wealth, and he even took one shoe and I took the other. But he did that to others who had come to Islam earlier than me, and who had been present at Badr. He was harsh with me, but he was similarly harsh with others. I expected him to treat me well because we were closely related, but I saw that he did not care about that and he did not worry

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[277] Nasâ'i, hadith no. 8283. A *ṣaḥeeḥ* report from *as-Sunan al-Kubra*. *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/496, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[278] *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerah wa Ḥayât al-Faqoor*, p. 219.

about the blame of anyone for the sake of the truth. That is what took away the feelings I had about him. He got upset with me, but it was only because we had different views. I was there in the arena of war, striving hard. I was there and he was not. I used to give based on the circumstances and he did not like that."[279] When death approached and he realized that, he wept and said: "There is no deed that I have done that gives me more hope, after saying *Lâ ilâha illa-Allâh*, than an intensely cold night with a raiding party of the *Muhâjireen*, which I spent carrying my shield in the rain, waiting for morning to come so that we could raid the *kuffâr*. You must engage in jihad. I witnessed such and such battles, and there is no place on my body the size of a handspan that has not received a blow from a sword or been pierced by an arrow or spear, but here I am, dying on my bed as a camel dies. May the cowards never prosper. I sought death in the places where it may be sought, but it was only decreed that I should die on my own bed."[280] Khâlid asked 'Umar to execute his will, in which it said: "I entrust my affairs, my estate and the execution of my will to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb." 'Umar (ﷺ) wept and mourned deeply for him, and the daughters of his paternal uncle also wept for him. It was said to 'Umar that he should tell them to stop, but he said: "Let them weep for Abu Sulaymân so long as they are not eulogizing him or babbling. For the like of Abu Sulaymân let the weepers weep."[281]

And he said concerning him, "A hole has developed in the structure of Islam." When Hishâm ibn al-Bakhtari came to 'Umar with some people from Banu Makhzoom, 'Umar said to Hishâm, who was a poet, "Recite to me what you said about Khâlid." When he recited it, he said, "You have fallen short in praising Abu

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[279] *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed*, by Ṣâdiq 'Arjoon, 349; *al-Khilâfah wa al-Khulafa'*, p. 198.

[280] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 1/382; *aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 367.

[281] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 366.

Sulaymân, may Allah have mercy on him. He loved to humiliate *shirk* and its people." Then he said: "May Allah have mercy on Abu Sulaymân. What is with Allah is better for him than what he had (in this world). He is missed after his death and he was praised whilst he lived.[282] No one will live forever."[283] He died and was buried in Homs, in Syria, in 21 A.H. May Allah bestow abundant mercy upon him and raise his status among the righteous.

[282] *Tahdheeb Târeekh Dimashq*, 5/116.

[283] *Khâlid ibn al-Waleed*, by Sâdiq 'Arjoon, p. 348.

CHAPTER SIX
The Conquests of Iraq and the East at the Time of 'Umar

1. The Second Stage of the Conquest of Iraq and the East

The conquests in Iraq at the time of Abu Bakr, under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, represent the first stage of the Islamic conquests which spread out towards the east. They have been discussed in detail in my book *Abu Bakr (ﷺ) Shakhsiyatuhu wa 'Asruhu*. During the reign of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ), there were further conquests.

1.1. The appointment of Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi as leader of the war in Iraq

When Abu Bakr died and was buried at night on Tuesday 22 *Jumâda al-Âkhirah* 13 A.H., the following morning 'Umar exhorted the people to fight the people of Iraq and he reminded them of the reward for that. But no one responded because the people did not like to fight the Persians, due to their strength and toughness in fighting. He exhorted them again on the second and third days, and no one responded. Al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah spoke well and told them of the conquests of most of the land of Iraq that Allah had granted at the hands of Khâlid, and of the wealth and property that was there. But

no one responded on the third day. On the fourth day, the first of the Muslims to respond was Abu 'Ubayd ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi, then the people responded one after another.[1] Saleeṭ ibn Qays al-Anṣâri responded to the call of 'Umar after Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi and said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I am giving myself for the sake of Allah as do those of my cousins who agree to come and others who have joined me."[2] These words of Saleeṭ had a strong impact, encouraging the people, raising their morale and increasing their desire for jihad against the Persians. They asked the caliph to appoint a man from among the *Muhâjireen* or Anṣâr over them, and 'Umar said: "By Allah, I cannot find anyone who is more deserving of that than the one who encouraged the people first. Were it not that Saleeṭ is too hasty in war, I would have appointed him over you. But Abu 'Ubayd is the commander and Saleeṭ is his adviser." The people said, "We will listen and obey."[3] According to another report: "He appointed Abu 'Ubayd over them all, although he was not a *Ṣaḥâbi*. It was said to 'Umar, 'Why didn't you appoint a man from the *Ṣaḥâbah* over them?' He said, 'Rather I will appoint the first one who responded. You became superior to the people because of your support for this religion, but he is the one who responded before you.' Then he called him and advised him with regard to himself to fear Allah and with regard to the Muslims to be kind to them. He commanded him to consult the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and to consult Saleeṭ ibn Qays, because he was a man who was experienced in war."[4]

'Umar's advice to Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi included the following words: "Listen to the Companions of the Messenger of

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[1] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/26.

[2] *Al-Futooḥ* by Ibn A'tham, 1/164; *al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 216.

[3] *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 216.

[4] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/26.

Allah (ﷻ) and let them have a say in this matter. Do not rush into decisions, rather take your time, for war cannot be led except by a man who takes his time in making decisions and who knows the right time to move. Nothing prevented me from appointing Saleeṭ but his haste. Being hasty in war, except in cases where the situation is clear, will lead to doom."[5] Then he said: "You are going to a land of treachery, betrayal and oppression. You are going to people who are audacious in committing evil and know it well; they have forgotten good and become ignorant of it. So see what you will do. Watch what you say and do not disclose your secrets, for so long as the one who has a secret and is keeping it, he will be safe, but if he does not keep the secret, that will be the cause of his doom."[6]

Then he commanded al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah to go ahead, and the army would catch up with him. He commanded him to go out and mobilize those of the apostates who had truly repented. So he set out, hastening until he reached al-Ḥeerah. 'Umar followed the events on the fronts in Iraq and Syria, supplying the army with provisions and reinforcements, sending instructions and commands to them and setting out battle plans which he himself supervised.

The Muslims, who were seven thousand strong, marched towards Iraq. 'Umar wrote to Abu 'Ubaydah, telling him to send whoever was in Iraq of those who had been with Khâlid in Iraq. So he equipped ten thousand men, led by Hâshim ibn 'Utbah. 'Umar sent Jareer ibn 'Abdullâh al-Bajali with four thousand men to Iraq, and he came to Koofah. When the people arrived in Iraq, they found the Persians in a state of political turmoil. The latest development was that Boorân the daughter of Chosroes had become their queen after they had killed her predecessor Azarmidakht. Boorân delegated the

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[5] *Itmâm al-Wafâ' fee Seerat al-Khulafâ'*, p. 65.

[6] Ibid.

running of the kingdom's affairs to a man called Rustam ibn Farrakhzâd, on the basis that he would conduct the war, and the power would be returned to the family of Chosroes, which he accepted. This Rustam was an astrologer who knew the stars very well. It was said to him, "What made you do that?" meaning, when you know that this is not going to last. He said: "Greed and the love of power."[7]

1.2. The Battle of an-Namâriq, the Battle of as-Saqâṭiyah in Kaskar, and the Battle of Baroosma

1.2.1. The battle of an-Namâriq 13 A.H.

This battle followed the arrival of Abu 'Ubayd ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi and his assumption of military command in Iraq. It is as if the Persians wanted to frighten Abu 'Ubayd at the outset, when he was new in his position, so as to break his will and make him despair of victory. So they prepared the civilians and mobilized their troops, and met the Muslims there (in an-Namâriq), from behind and from in front. They wrote to the chieftains of the masses telling them to revolt against the Muslims, and they sent to every region a man to stir up the people. They sent Jabân to al-Babahaqqabâdh al-Asfal, and Narsi to Kaskar, and they sent troops to fight al-Muthanna... Al-Muthanna heard news of that, so he got the army to keep a lookout and was very cautious. The chieftains revolted one after another, and the people of various regions revolted one after another. Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi and al-Muthanna camped in Khaffân, then the battle took place in al-Namâriq. The fighting was intense, but Allah defeated the Persians. The commanders Jabân and Mardânshah, who were leading the two

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[7] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/27.

flanks of the army, were taken prisoner; together, they had led the revolt.[8]

The one who captured Jabân was Maṭar ibn Fuḍḍah at-Tameemi, who did not know who he was. Jabân tricked him by offering him something to let him go, but the Muslims caught him and brought him to Abu 'Ubayd. They told him that he was the leader of the Persians and suggested that he execute him. He said: "I fear Allah if I kill him when one of the Muslims guaranteed his safety." The Muslims, in their mutual love and support, are like a single body, and what is binding on one is binding on all. They said, "He is the king," meaning the leader. He said, "Even so, I will not betray (that guarantee)," and he let him go.[9]

This attitude on the part of Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi is regarded as an example of Muslim tolerance and their fulfilment of covenants, even if only some of them had agreed to them. Undoubtedly this sublime attitude had a great impact in attracting people to enter Islam, when news spread among the people that the Muslims had let one of the Persian leaders go, one of their worst enemies, simply because one Muslim had agreed to set him free in return for a ransom. They were attracted to this religion which produced such men. We should not forget the brilliant attitude of al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah, when Abu 'Ubayd became the commander, even though he was coming to Iraq for the first time because the caliph had appointed him. He was a good commander and a good soldier. This was one of the characteristics of al-Muthanna. He had done the same thing with Khâlid ibn al-Waleed before, and his service to Islam was no different whether he was a leader or a soldier. Such are great men.[10]

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8 *Ḥarakat al-Fatḥ al-Islâmi* by Shukri Faiṣal, p. 72.

9 *Al-Kâmil fee at-Târeekh*, 2/87.

10 *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/334.

1.2.2. The battle of as-Saqâṭiyah in Kaskar

Then Abu 'Ubayd went after those who had fled, who had sought refuge in the city of Kaskar[11], which was under the command of a nephew of Chosroes whose name was Narsi. Narsi had supported the fight against Abu 'Ubayd. Abu 'Ubayd met them in as-Saqâṭiyah[12], where he defeated them and acquired a great deal of booty and food.[13] Narsi fled, and the Muslims defeated his army and took over his land, and found a large amount of supplies in his stores.

Abu 'Ubayd stayed in Kaskar and sent forces to pursue the Persians and discipline the people of neighbouring towns who had broken the treaty and supported the Persians. The Muslims prevailed in the region after this victory. Some governors came seeking peace treaties, two of whom brought some of their finest food to Abu 'Ubayd and said, "This is to honour you." He said, "Have you honoured the rest of the troops in the same manner?" They said, "It is not easy, but we will do that." Abu 'Ubayd said, "We have no need of it if there is not enough for all the troops." Then they got scared and feared for their lives. Abu 'Ubayd said, "Do you not know that I will only eat if there is enough for those who are with me?" They said, "There is no one left who has not had his fill of this and more in their camp." When he realized that, he accepted it from them. He ate some and he sent some to some guests whom he had invited to eat with him. These visitors had some of that Persian food, and they did not think that Abu 'Ubayd would have such food. They thought that they were being invited to eat the kind of coarse food that Abu 'Ubayd usually ate, and they did not like to leave the food that had been brought to them. They said, "Tell the commander, we do not want to leave anything that the chieftains have brought to us." He sent word

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[11] *Kaskar is a small town between Koofah and Baṣra.*

[12] As-Saqâṭiyah: A district of Kaskar.

[13] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/272.

to them saying, "There is a lot of Persian food, come and compare it with what you had."[14]

This noble and humble commander ate after he had refused the Persians' food twice, because he realized, the third time, that they had fed all the troops with similar food and more. He did not like to eat until he had called his visitors and urged them to eat, and he knew that they had had some of that Persian food and he listed the types of food, to encourage them to join him. This is a kind of noble generosity, and it is one of the most important elements of leadership. This attitude shows us the sublime level of noble attitudes that the *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them all) and those who followed them had reached.[15]

1.2.3. The battle of Baroosma 13 A.H.

Then they met in a place between Kaskar and as-Saqâṭiyah which was called Baroosma. On the right and left flanks of Narsi's army were two of his cousins, Bandawayh and Beerawayh. Rustam had put the army under the command of Jalinus. When Abu 'Ubayd heard of that, he hastened to fight before the rest came. The fighting was intense, and the Persians were defeated and Narsi fled. Abu 'Ubayd sent al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah and other troops to some areas of that region, such as the river of Jawr which they conquered by means of treaties and by force. They imposed the *jizyah* and *kharâj*, and captured a great deal of booty, praise be to Allah. They defeated Jalinus, who had come to support Jabân, and captured a lot of booty from his army and seized his wealth, and he fled to his people, humiliated and defeated.[16]

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[14] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/272, 273

[15] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/336.

[16] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah* by Dr. Muhammad Ṣâmil as-Sulami, p. 89.

Thus the three armies of Persia were destroyed in a short period of time. The Persians could have united these armies and attacked the Muslims from all sides, because of their great numbers, but Allah made them confused and because of their great fear of the Muslims, each commander was hoping that the other would do the job and weaken the Muslims so that he could come and claim victory. What benefited the Muslims was their ability to move quickly, in contrast to the slow movements of the enemy army.[17]

1.3. Abu 'Ubayd's battle of the bridge 13 A.H.

When al-Jalinus fled from the Muslims, the Persians regrouped and gathered around Rustam. He mobilized a huge army led by Bahman Jâdhawayh and gave him the flag of Chosroes which was called Dirafsh Kabyân (which means "great flag") and which the Persians regarded as lucky. It was made of tiger skins, and was eight cubits wide and twelve cubits long. They reached where the Muslims were, and between them was a river, crossed by a bridge. They sent word saying, "Either you cross over to us, or we will cross over to you." The Muslims said to their commander Abu 'Ubayd, "Tell them to cross over to us." He said: "They are not more courageous than we are." Then he crossed over to them and they met in a narrow place, where they fought intensely. The Muslims had nearly ten thousand men. The Persians had brought elephants with them, which were wearing a lot of bells, to scare the Muslims' horses. Every time they attacked the Muslims, the horses fled from the elephants, because of the sound of those bells. Only a few horses could be made to stand firm, with great difficulty. When the Muslims attacked them, their horses would not go near the elephants, and the Persians hit them

[17] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/337.

with arrows and killed many people. But the Muslims still managed to kill six thousand of them.[18]

The Muslims' horses were scared of the sound of the bells worn by the elephants, and the Muslims could not reach the enemy with the elephants scaring their horses, so Abu 'Ubayd went on foot and the people did likewise, and they started fighting them with their swords. The Muslims lost their horses and became foot soldiers, fighting the Persian elephants, horsemen and foot soldiers, as well as the archers who struck the Muslims as they were trying to drive their horses forward, and the horses were refusing. It was a difficult situation, but the Muslims showed great courage and sacrifice, such as has rarely been seen in history. They stood up to the Persians despite their superiority in weaponry and means of fighting. The elephants were the worst weapon faced by the Muslims, for they had thrown their ranks into disarray. Abu 'Ubayd called them to focus on the elephants, cut their saddle straps and push their riders off. He himself started with the white elephant; he hung onto its strap and cut it, and its riders fell off. The Muslims did likewise, not leaving any elephant but they pushed its riders off and killed them. But the elephants continued to attack, because they had been trained to do so. Abu 'Ubayd thought that he should get rid of them, so he asked how they could be killed, and he was told that if he cut off their trunks, they would die. So he attacked the white elephant and struck its trunk with the sword, but the elephant defended itself with its foreleg, throwing him to the ground and then stepping on him. His brother al-Ḥakam ibn Mas'ood took the flag and fought the elephant until he managed to get it off Abu 'Ubayd, but the same thing happened to him as had happened to Abu 'Ubayd. Al-Ḥakam wanted to kill it, but it threw him down with its foreleg and stepped on him. The Muslim

[18] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 90.

flag passed to those who had been named by Abu 'Ubayd, including his three sons, Wahb, Mâlik and Jabr, until they were all killed, then leadership passed to al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah, at the end of the day. Some of the Muslims had crossed the bridge, retreating, and the withdrawal from the battlefield continued. When 'Abdullâh ibn Marthad ath-Thaqafi saw that, he hastened to cut the bridge, and said: "Die for the same cause as your commanders died, or be victorious!" He tried to stop the people crossing the bridge, so they brought him to al-Muthanna, who hit him because he was so angry with what he had done. He said: "What made you do that?" He said, "So that they would fight." But his idea was not appropriate, because cutting the bridge led to some of the Muslims falling into the river and drowning, because of the intense pressure from the Persians. But the idea of the Muslims protecting those who were left by withdrawing if they could was the right idea. This is what al-Muthanna did when he ordered that the bridge be restored. He and the Muslim heroes with him stood and protected the Muslims' backs until they had crossed. Al-Muthanna said: "O' people, we will protect you; take your time to cross (the bridge) and do not rush, for we will not leave until we see that you are on the other side. Do not drown yourselves." Muthanna and the heroes who were with him, such as 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr and al-Kalj aḍ-Ḍabbi, were the last ones to cross. Bahman Jâdhawayh tried to destroy the remaining Muslims, but he was not able to. Muthanna robbed him of this opportunity when he took charge of this organized withdrawal. Undoubtedly these heroes who protected the Muslims' backs until they had withdrawn strove their utmost in standing firm before the enemy. Five thousand Muslims withdrew, leaving behind four thousand martyrs, among whom was a large number of the *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them), especially those who had accompanied Abu 'Ubayd from Madeenah. Two thousand of those who withdrew returned to Madeenah and elsewhere, and only three thousand stayed with al-Muthanna. As for the Persians, six thousand

of them had been killed, despite the bad situation in which the Muslims had found themselves, which is indicative of their courage and steadfastness.[19]

The most important lessons of Abu 'Ubayd's battle of the bridge

1.3.1. True dreams

Dawmah, the wife of Abu 'Ubayd, had seen a dream in which a man came down from heaven with a vessel in which there was a drink. Abu 'Ubayd, his son Jabr and some of his family drank from it. She told Abu 'Ubayd about that and he said: "This is martyrdom." Abu 'Ubayd announced to the people: "If I am killed, then So and so is in charge of the people," and he listed seven men of Thaqeef, who were relatives of his whom his wife had seen in her dream. When the last of them was killed, leadership passed to al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah.[20]

1.3.2. Two mistakes which led to defeat

Abu 'Ubayd went against the advice of the army commanders and prominent figures who were with him, who told him not to cross the bridge, but he did not pay attention. He went his own way and crossed the bridge with great courage and the desire for martyrdom, but he did not plan properly for the battle. He did not study the lay of the land sufficiently.[21] He lost an element of security when he confined himself to a place with a narrow exit and it is as if he led his

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[19] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/279; *at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/341.

[20] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/277.

[21] *'Awâmil an-Naṣr wa al-Hazeemah*, p. 55.

army into a trap with no reason. He lost the advantage of using different types of weapons together when his horsemen no longer played a role in the battle, and his forces had to proceed on foot with no cavalry, and they had to face the infantry, cavalry and elephants of the Persians. There was no efficient leadership in this battle until al-Muthanna finally took over, after the seven who had gone before him. He also forfeited the ability to manoeuvre his troops properly because of the narrowness of the place, as the large number of his troops was no use in unsuitable terrain, and he did not succeed in choosing a good battle plan to help him achieve his aims. He lost all that, and in fact he handed it all to the enemy to use against him.[22]

What made Abu 'Ubayd's error worse was another mistake which compounded the first. This was the mistake made by 'Abdullâh ibn Marthad ath-Thaqafi when he cut the bridge so that none of the Muslims could retreat. Were it not for the grace of Allah, then the steadfastness of al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah and those who were with him, all the Muslims would have been killed.[23]

1.3.3. The value of strong leadership in the field

The battle of the bridge proves the importance of strong leadership in the field, as represented by al-Muthanna and the commanders who were with him. When calamity befell the army, those leaders who could do so brought their troops out of that situation.[24] With the help of those heroes, al-Muthanna was able to protect the Muslim army and he was the last one to cross the bridge. This is one of the noblest kinds of sacrifice.[25]

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[22] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 414.

[23] *'Awâmil an-Naṣr wa al-Hazeemah*, p. 55.

[24] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 414.

[25] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/343.

1.3.4. Al-Muthanna raised the morale of his troops

Al-Muthanna withdrew with four thousand troops who were left from the original number of ten thousand, and he began his pursuit of the two Persian leaders, Jabân and Mardanshah, in the direction of Alees (as-Samâwâh). Al-Muthanna pursued them for a long distance, because he did not want them to launch a counter-attack until they had gone far from the place of withdrawal. When he reached as-Samâwâh, he launched a sudden and shocking attack with his cavalry, which he himself led, and defeated them. It seems that the element of surprise, and the fact that they could not imagine that a man who has lost most of his army would be able to show such resolve, left the Persians stunned by this attack, and they suffered great losses as a result. Al-Muthanna managed to capture the two leaders, whom he executed. This victory had an immense impact on strengthening the morale of those who were left of his army and of the local inhabitants; it also raised the status of al-Muthanna in the eyes of his troops and the neighbouring tribes.[26]

1.3.5. Every time the Muslims are faced with a dilemma, Allah will create the means to get them out of that

Al-Muthanna stayed in Iraq with a small number who were not enough to guard the lands and possessions that the Muslims had gained. The Persians could have driven the remnant of the Muslim army out of Iraq, and they would have found that the Arabs who were still loyal to them would chase the Muslims out into the desert. But Allah was with this believing group as He is with the believers in all places. Every time the sincere Muslims fall into a dilemma, Allah creates the means for them to get out of that. Allah created something

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[26] *Al-Ḥarb an-Nafsiyah*, by Dr. Aḥmad Nawfal, 1/167.

that distracted the Persians from the Muslims and they split into two groups, one with Rustam and one with Fayrazân. News of that reached the Persian ruler, Bahman Jâdhawayh, and he hastened to return to al-Madâ'in, as he was one who was looked up to in political affairs. Thus Allah spared the Muslims from fighting and He spared them from calamity. This gave them the opportunity to receive reinforcements coming from Madeenah to strengthen them and make their army bigger.[27]

1.4. The battle of al-Buwayb 13 A.H.

'Umar mobilized the people and sent reinforcements to the Muslim army in Iraq, among whom were Jareer ibn 'Abdullâh al-Bajali and his people, and Ḥandhalah ibn ar-Rabee'. He also sent Hilâl ibn 'Alqamah and a group from the tribes of Khath'am under the leadership of 'Abdullâh ibn Dhi as-Sahmayn. He also sent them to Iraq to join the Muslim troops there. Both 'Umar ibn Rib'i ibn Ḥandhalah, with his people, and Rib'i ibn 'Âmir ibn Khâlid came to the caliph and he sent them to join the troops in Iraq too. Thus columns of reinforcements came one after another, marching towards Iraq. At the same time, al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah as-Shaybâni sent word to the Muslim commanders in Iraq, asking for support, and they sent reinforcements to increase the size of his army.[28]

When the Persian leaders found out that a huge army had gathered around al-Muthanna, they sent Mahrân al-Hamadhâni with an army of horsemen to confront the army of al-Muthanna. When al-Muthanna found out about that, he wrote to the reinforcements who were coming to him, telling them to join him at al-Buwayb. These

[27] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/345, 346.

[28] *Al-'Amaliyât at-Ta'arruḍiyah ad-Difâ'iyah* by Nihâd 'Abbâs, p. 115.

reinforcements were being led by Jareer ibn 'Abdullâh, and when al-Muthanna wrote to him, he said: "A new development has arisen and we cannot wait here until you join us, so hasten to join us and we will met in al-Buwayb." So they met in al-Buwayb, and there was nothing between them and the Persian army but the river. Al-Muthanna waited until Mahrân wrote to him and said: "Either you cross over to us or we will cross over to you." Al-Muthanna said, "Cross over." So Mahrân crossed over with his army. That happened in Ramaḍân 13 A.H. Al-Muthanna stood up and addressed his troops, and said to the Muslims: "You are fasting and fasting weakens you; I think that you should break your fast and eat something to gain strength to fight your enemy." They agreed to that and broke their fast. Then al-Muthanna prepared his army and went around encouraging them to fight, saying to every group: "I hope that the Arabs will not be defeated because of you. By Allah, there is nothing that I want for myself this day that I do not want for you." The narrators said that al-Muthanna was kind to them in word and deed, and he stayed with the people at times of hardship and times of ease; no one could find fault with him in word or deed.[29] This is indicative of his good leadership and great wisdom, and of the fact that the army obeyed him out of love and conviction. When al-Muthanna was pleased with the army's preparations he said, "I will say *takbeer* three times, so get ready, then attack when I say it the fourth time." But when he said the first *takbeer*, the Persians attacked first, so they rushed forward and engaged with them with the first *takbeer*. It was not the Persians' custom to rush into battle, but perhaps what had happened at the battle of the bridge, where the Muslims were defeated, had taken away some of the Persians' fear of the Muslims. Thus the Persians began the attack, and the Muslims stood firm and continued to engage in heavy fighting with them. As well as

[29] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/287.

participating in the fighting, al-Muthanna was also watching carefully over his army. Whenever he saw any weak point, he sent a man there to tell them, "The commander sends his *salâm* to you and says: "Do not expose the Muslims to danger today." They agreed and filled the gap.[30]

When the battle had raged fiercely for a long time, al-Muthanna said to Anas ibn Hilâl: "O' Anas, if you see me attacking Mahrân, join me," and he said likewise to Ibn Mardi al-Fahr. Then al-Muthanna attacked Mahrân, and pushed him towards the right flank. Al-Muthanna continued to put pressure on his army. The cores of the two armies met in combat and the dust flew up; the flanks were also fighting and could not come to the aid of their leaders, either the *mushrikoon* or the Muslims. Mas'ood ibn Ḥârithah, the commander of the Muslim infantry, said to his troops: "If you see that we are struck, do not stop fighting, for you will expose the army and cause defeat. Stick to your positions and do not leave any gaps."[31] Mas'ood and other Muslim commanders were struck, and Mas'ood saw his troops wavering because he had been hit and was weak and heavily wounded. He said, "O' troops of Bakr ibn Wâ'il, raise your flags, may Allah grant you victory! Do not be stunned because of my death." Al-Muthanna realized that his brother had been struck so he addressed the people, saying, "O' Muslims, do not worry about my brother being struck, for the best of you die in that manner."

Anas ibn Hilâl an-Numayri fought until he was struck. Al-Muthanna carried him and carried his brother Mas'ood, and brought them to his tent. The fighting was still raging all along the front, but in the heart of the battle the tide began to turn against the Persians. The core of the Muslim army inflicted heavy losses on the Persian

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[30] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/288.

[31] Ibid.

core, and al-Muthanna drove a wedge into the core of the Persian army. Among those who penetrated the Persian army was Jareer ibn 'Abdullâh, along with Bajeer, Ibn al-Hawbar and al-Mundhir ibn Ḥassân, and the people of Ḍabbah who were with them. Qurṭ ibn Jamâḥ al-'Abdi fought until many spears and swords were broken in his hand; he killed Shahr Barâz, one of the Persian chieftains and the leader of their cavalry. The fighting continued until the Muslims destroyed the core of the Persian army and penetrated deep into their ranks.[32] Al-Muthanna stood where the dust was thick until it settled, and the core of the *mushrik* army had been finished off and their commander Mahrâm had been killed, but the flanks of the armies were still fighting one another. When the Muslims on the flanks saw that the core of the army had been defeated and its people were dead, their resolve against the *mushrikeen* was strengthened and they started chasing the Persians. Al-Muthanna and the Muslims in the core were praying for their victory, until the Muslims defeated the Persians. Then al-Muthanna rushed to the bridge before the Persians got there and cut it, and the Persians spread all over the banks of the Euphrates and the Muslim horsemen attacked them and killed them, leaving their bodies in heaps. Some narrators report that the number of their slain reached one hundred thousand.[33]

1.4.1. The council of war after the battle

The fighting ceased and al-Muthanna and the Muslims looked at the tens of thousands of bodies; the ground was soaked with their blood and remains. Then he sat with the army to discuss the matter and ask them what they had done. Every time a man came al-Muthanna said to him: "Tell me what you did," and they told him and

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[32] *At-Tareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, Pp. 433, 434; *aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/289.
[33] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/349; *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/289.

gave him a picture of the battle. Al-Muthanna said: "The Arabs and the Persians fought during the *Jâhiliyah* and after Islam came. By Allah, during the *Jâhiliyah*, a hundred Persians were stronger than a thousand Arabs, but today a hundred Arabs are stronger than a thousand Persians. Allah has taken away their power and weakened them, so do not be confused by their appearance or their great numbers..."[34]

This comment at this time was entirely appropriate, because al-Muthanna explained his good experience in war with the Persians at a time when many of the Muslims had come to Iraq to take part in war against the Persians for the first time. Al-Muthanna compared what they had seen in a particular battle with other battles that he had fought before.[35]

1.4.2. Al-Muthanna's regret at cutting the Persians' line of retreat

Al-Muthanna regretted cutting the Persians' line of retreat and taking away the bridge from behind them. He said: "I made a mistake, but Allah reduced its impact when I rushed to the bridge ahead of them and cut it so as to corner them. I believe this was a mistake, so do not do it and do not follow my example. It was a mistake on my part; no one should be cornered."[36] Al-Muthanna explained the reason for this mistake at the end of this speech, when he noted, on the basis of his experience in warfare, that preventing the enemy from fleeing makes them fight more fiercely in self-defence. When a man realizes that he is going to be killed, he does his utmost to defend himself. This cost the army a great deal of effort as they

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[34] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/290.

[35] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/352.

[36] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/291.

tried to finish off the enemy, but Allah reduced the impact of this mistake as al-Muthanna stated, as it helped the Muslims to remain steadfast, so their power was greater than the enemy could bear. Allah cast fear into the hearts of the enemy until they lost their ability to resist and defend themselves.[37]

Al-Muthanna's acknowledgment of this mistake, although he was the man who achieved a great victory in this battle, is indicative of strong faith and selflessness, for he put the interests of the group before his own self-interests. This is the mark of a great man.[38]

1.4.3. Al-Muthanna's knowledge of military psychology

In addition to what we have mentioned of al-Muthanna's genius, his brilliance included another depth which has to do with war, which was his knowledge of military psychology and how to deal with one's brothers in jihad. We see that a spirit of overwhelming love tied al-Muthanna to those who were with him, which highlights his emotional attitude towards them. This stands out in the way that he spoke to them and the way they spoke of him. We see it when he went around on his horse ash-Shumoos to each group in turn, encouraging them and giving them instructions, and motivating them to do their best, telling them, "By Allah, I like for myself this day nothing other than what I like for all of you."[39] And they responded to him in like manner. The narrators say that no one could find fault with him in word or deed.[40] When he saw the Persian ranks attacking, with their voices raised, he realized the effect that this would have in hand-to-hand combat, especially when the memory of

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[37] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/350.

[38] Ibid.

[39] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/287; *aṭ Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 446.

[40] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/287.

Abu 'Ubayd's bridge was still fresh in their minds. So he spoke cunning words which helped them to remain steadfast and counteracted the effect of that loud noise. He said, with amazing calmness, "What you are hearing is a sign of failure. Keep quiet and only speak in whispers."[41]

When his brother Mas'ood was struck a fatal blow, he spoke words that deserve to be engraved in letters of gold: "O' Muslims, do not worry about the fall of my brother, for this is how the best of you fall."[42] No less great were the words spoken by his brother himself, when he was offering his soul with the joy of martyrdom: "Raise your flags, may Allah grant you victory. Do not worry about my falling." When al-Muthanna stood to offer the funeral prayer for his brother and some of the martyrs he said: "What consoles me is the fact that they witnessed the battle of al-Buwayb; they went forward and were steadfast; they were not scared and they did not retreat. Indeed in martyrdom there is expiation for sins."[43] Al-Muthanna loved his troops and was compassionate towards them, and checked on them frequently. At the same time, he was strict and decisive, adhering to what is known nowadays as military discipline.[44] When he saw a man who was eager and pushing ahead, he said, "What is the matter with him?" They said, "He is one of those who fled from the battlefield on the day of the bridge, and now he is eager to fight." He hit him with his spear and said, "What's wrong with you? Stay where you are, then when you see someone of your own caliber, then take care of him; you do not have to kill yourself." He said, "I shall do that," and he settled down and stayed in his rank.[45] As al-

[41] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 446.
[42] Ibid.
[43] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/291.
[44] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 447.
[45] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/283.

Muthanna was compassionate towards his troops, the feeling was mutual. We see that clearly in the poetry which flowed from the lips of his soldiers. One of his troops composed lines of verse which indicated that he clearly preferred al-Muthanna to Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and Abu 'Ubaydah ath-Thaqafi. The poet was from the tribe of 'Abd Qays, he was not from Banu Shaybân or Banu Bakr ibn Wâ'il, so that it might be said that he had a clannish attachment to his own people.[46]

Al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah was a commander with a deep knowledge of military psychology, centuries before any professor wrote a single letter on this subject.[47]

1.4.4. The attitude of the womenfolk of the *Mujâhideen*

One of the attitudes which should be noted is that of the womenfolk of the Muslims, when the Muslim commander sent them some of the food that they had acquired. He sent it with one of the Christian Arab leaders, whose name was 'Amr ibn 'Abdul-Maseeḥ ibn Buqaylah, with some of his men. When the women saw them, they screamed thinking it was a raid, and they started to protect their children by throwing stones and sticks at them. 'Amr ibn 'Abdul-Maseeḥ said: "This is how you would expect the womenfolk of this army to be," and he gave them the good news of the victory.[48] This attitude is indicative of a sound Muslim education and shows how a Muslim character should be, even among women, for they must have had some training in how to defend themselves when there were no men around. This decisive victory gave the Muslims free rein in Iraq in the region between the two rivers. Al-Muthanna sent his leaders to

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[46] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p 447.

[47] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 448.

[48] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/352; *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/292.

subdue other regions to Muslim rule, where they collected the booty that Allah bestowed upon them so that they could continue the jihad against their enemies.[49]

1.4.5. Pursuit of the fleeing remnants of the army

The joy of victory did not deflect al-Muthanna from his goal. After the battle, he urged the people to follow the defeated army to as-Sayyib. The Muslims set out after the fleeing remnants of the army. Among them were some who had been present at the battle of Abu 'Ubayd's bridge; they gathered a great deal of booty and raided as far as-Sâbâṭ, then they turned back and joined al-Muthanna. The importance of the battle of al-Buwayb lay not only in boosting morale after the defeat at the bridge, but also in giving the Muslims control over the entire region between the two rivers. They had been fighting no further than the Euphrates, then they fought in the region between the Euphrates and the Tigris. After al-Buwayb they were in full control of this region which extended between the Euphrates and the Tigris. They could travel throughout the whole region without fearing any enemy.[50] The battle of al-Buwayb was akin to the battle of al-Yarmook in Syria.[51]

1.4.6. The Persian reaction

Events such as these could not happen without there being some repercussions among the ruling circles of Persia. The Persian leaders got together and spoke to Rustam and Fayrazân, saying: "Why are you so divided that you have weakened the Persians and encouraged their enemies? By Allah, nothing has brought this

[49] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/352.

[50] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/293.

[51] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah Khilâfah 'Umar*, p. 93.

weakness upon us but you, O' commanders. You have divided the people of Persia and distracted them from their enemies. After Baghdad, Sâbâṭ and Takrit there is nothing left but al-Madâ'in. By Allah, you will unite, or we will start with you before anyone can rejoice in our misfortune. By Allah, were it not that killing you may lead to our own doom, we would have hastened to kill you now. If you do not give up (this division), we will kill you, then let us be doomed after we have had the satisfaction of killing you."[52]

After that, Rustam and Fayrazân went to Boorân and said to her: "Write to the wives and concubines of Chosroes and the wives and concubines of the family of Chosroes for us." So she did that and wrote a letter for them. They sent word, asking them to come, and they brought them all and handed them over to some men to torture them and make them tell them of any male child of Chosroes. They did not find any of them with these women, except that one of them said that there was no one left except a boy called Yazdagird, who was a son of Shahriyar the son of Chosroes; his mother was from the people of Baduria. They sent people after her and caught her, and demanded to know where he was. When the women were gathered together, his paternal uncle Sheerawayh was in the white palace and killed all the males of the family of Chosroes, seventeen brothers, so that no one would compete for the throne of Persia. She had smuggled him out and hidden him with his maternal uncles in Istakhar. Among those whom Sheerawayh killed was his brother Shahriyâr the son of Chosroes Barweez from his favourite wife Shireen. He was the father of this Yazdagird. They put pressure on the mother of Yazdagird and she told them where he was. They sent for him and brought him on the basis that he was the sole remaining male of the family of Sâsân (the Sasanids), and they appointed him as king. He was twenty-one years old, and they united around him and

[52] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/300.

all the Persians accepted him and competed in obeying him and supporting him. They thought that this was a way out of their dilemma.[53] Yazdagird III started to exercise his authority with the help of Rustam and Fayrazân. They renewed the border posts of Chosroes and appointed troops to each post and to al-Ḥeerah, al-Anbâr and al-Ablah.[54]

1.4.7. 'Umar's instructions to al-Muthanna

News of the movements of Yazdagird III reached al-Muthanna, details of which were brought by his spies. He wrote to 'Umar, telling him of these events and of the expected counter-attack. Al-Muthanna's prediction proved true, for the letter did not reach 'Umar before the people of the area between the two rivers turned *kâfir*, broke their treaty, and revolted against the Muslims. The Persians hastened their attack and marched to fight when those *ahl adh-dhimmah* revolted. When al-Muthanna saw that, he realized that he had advanced too far and had occupied a greater area than his forces could keep control of, so his occupation could not last. So he withdrew with his guards until he reached Dhu Qâr, and the people stayed in one camp in aṭ-Ṭaff. 'Umar was more cautious, and his letter reached them, saying: "Get out from among the Persians and go to the desert and scatter among the oases that are near the border with the Persians, on the border between your land and their land. Do not leave anyone of Rabee'ah or any of the fighters or horsemen of Muḍar and their allies without bringing them with you; if they come willingly, all well and good, otherwise use force. Stay close to the border between your land and theirs, until you receive further instructions."[55]

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[53] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/301; *aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 467.

[54] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 468.

[55] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/301.

Al-Muthanna camped in Dhu Qâr and the Muslims spread out in al-Jull and Sharâf, as far as Ghuḍa.[56] The forces scattered throughout the oases, from one end of the Iraq desert to the other, from Ghuḍa to al-Qaṭqaṭânah there were posts from which they could see one another and help one another if anything happened, watching and waiting for a new campaign. At the same time, the posts of Chosroes were on alert and the Persians were ready, but they were nervous and worried about a Muslim attack. The Muslims were eager to fight but their commanders were holding them back, following 'Umar's instructions and waiting for reinforcements. That was at the end of Dhu al-Qa'dah 13 A.H./January 635 C.E.[57] 'Umar said: "By Allah, I will send the kings of the Arabs to fight against the kings of the Persians."

Then the first thing that he did was to write to his agents who were in charge of the small towns and tribes. That was in Dhu al-Hijjah, at the time when the pilgrims were setting out for Ḥajj. The first tribes whose routes led to Makkah and Madeenah came to him, as did those who were on the road to Iraq, who were nearer to Madeenah. They came to him in Madeenah on the way back from Ḥajj and told him about those who were in Iraq. Those whose routes were close to Iraq joined al-Muthanna. 'Umar did not leave any leader, or any man of wisdom, noble position or power, or any *khaṭeeb* or poet, but he sent him against them. He sent the most prominent of people against them.[58]

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[56] Mountains in the direction of Baṣra. [Author]

[57] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, 470.

[58] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, p. 471.

2. The Battle of al-Qâdisiyah

When 'Umar found out that the Persians were making preparations and were gathering to eradicate the small number of Muslim forces remaining in Iraq, he issued orders for compulsory conscription, because the situation required that. Hence he commanded al-Muthanna to look at the tribes around him and see who was fit and able to fight and to bring them, willingly or otherwise. This was the compulsory conscription which 'Umar deemed essential, and he was the first one to do that in Islam. This shows that Muhammad Faraj, the author of *al-'Askariyah al-Islâmiyah*, was mistaken when he said that compulsory conscription first appeared at the time of the Umayyads. 'Umar issued the command for compulsory conscription and his command was carried out. No sooner had the caliph's letter reached al-Muthanna but he started to implement the orders contained therein immediately, according to the plan which 'Umar had drawn up for his movements. 'Umar sent word to his governors telling them not to leave anyone who had a weapon, horse, physical strength or wisdom, but to send them to him. He ordered them to recruit people by force and asked them to send the new recruits to Iraq.[59]

The situation in Persia changed with the arrival of Yazdagird as ruler, and the situation of the Persians was as follows: There was now internal stability as the result of Yazdagird's appointment and the people's uniting around him. The Persians felt reassured and confident, and their leaders competed in obeying and supporting him. They announced a general conscription which included everyone whom the Persians could recruit; they distributed groups of soldiers throughout the land that had been conquered by the Muslims.

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[59] *Itmâm al-Wafa'*, p. 70.

Finally they provoked the local population and incited them against the Muslims, until they broke their treaty, renounced Muslim protection and rebelled against them.[60]

The situation of the Muslims changed and became as follows:

Withdrawal

Al-Muthanna and the other leaders left, withdrawing from among the Persians and leaving the lands they had conquered. They withdrew and dispersed among the oases on the border between the Arab and Persian lands. Al-Muthanna camped at Dhu Qâr, and the rest of the people camped in aṭ-Ṭaff. They set up posts in Iraq where they could see one another and come to one another's aid if needed.

The compulsory conscription among the Muslims balanced out the compulsory conscription among the Persians.[61]

2.1. Appointment of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ as commander in Iraq

This was the third stage in the conquest of Iraq, which started with the appointment of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) as commander of the jihad in Iraq in 14 A.H. That year — 14 A.H. — began with 'Umar urging the people to engage in jihad against the Persians. On the first day of Muḥarram he rode out from Madeenah at the head of the armies and camped at an oasis called Ṣirâr.[62] He camped there, planning to lead the attack on Iraq himself. He left 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib in charge of Madeenah during his absence, and took with him 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân and the leaders of the *Ṣaḥâbah*. Then he held a

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[60] *Ḥarakat al-Fatḥ al-Islâmi*, p. 80.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ṣirâr: A place three miles from Madeenah. *Mu'jam al-Buldân*, 3/398.

council to consult the *Saḥâbah* about what he was planning to do. The call went out, *aṣ-Ṣalâtu Jâmi'ah* (prayer is about to begin), and he sent for 'Ali, who came from Madeenah. Then he consulted them and they all agreed that he should go to Iraq, except 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf, who said to him: "I fear that if anything happens to you, the Muslims will become weak in all regions of the land. I think that you should send a man and return to Madeenah." 'Umar and the people decided that Ibn 'Awf was right, and 'Umar asked: "Who do you think I should send to Iraq?" He said, "You have already found him." He then asked, "Who is he?" He said, "The lion in his den: Sa'd ibn Mâlik az-Zuhri (i.e., Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ)." 'Umar liked the idea and sent for Sa'd, whom he appointed as commander in Iraq.[63]

2.1.1. 'Umar's advice to Sa'd

When Sa'd (ﷺ) came to Madeenah, 'Umar appointed him as commander of the war in Iraq, and said to him: "O' Sa'd, do not think that you will be fine just because you are the maternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and the Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Allah does not erase what is bad by something else that is bad, rather He erases what is bad by something that is good. There is no relationship between Allah and anyone except through obedience to Him. The people, noble and ignoble alike, are all equal before Allah. Allah is their Lord and they are His slaves, and their criterion for superiority is being sound. They attain what is with Him by means of obedience. Look at the way of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) from the time he was sent until he left us, and adhere to it, for it is the proper way. This is my advice to you. If you ignore it and turn away from it, you will be one of the losers."[64] This is eloquent advice from

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[63] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 96.

[64] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/306.

a great and wise caliph. 'Umar understood the weak point that could affect Sa'd, which is that he thought that he would be fine because of his close relationship to the Prophet (ﷺ), which might make him feel somewhat proud towards other Muslims. So 'Umar reminded him of the general Islamic principle which is that the criterion of honour for a Muslim in this life — as Allah their Lord said, and they are His slaves — is being sound, and they can only attain what is with Him by obeying Him. Being sound means being free of diseases of the heart, as if he is saying that superiority is achieved by keeping away from sin and by obeying Allah. This is the *taqwa* (piety, fear of Allah) which Allah has made the criterion of honour, as He (ﷻ) says:

﴾... Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that [believer] who has *at-Taqwa* [i.e. he is one of the *Muttaqoon* (the pious)]...﴿
(Qur'an 49: 13)

This is a just and merciful criterion, which every Muslim can attain if he strives to seek the pleasure of Allah and happiness in the Hereafter. Then at the end of this advice, 'Umar mentioned the importance of adhering to the way of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), which includes adhering to the religion as a whole and applying it to the people.[65]

2.1.2. Other advice

Then the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (رضي الله عنه) advised Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ again, when he wanted to send him, saying: "I have appointed you in charge of the war in Iraq, so heed my advice. You are going to face something difficult, and nothing can save you from it except the truth. Accustom yourself and those who are with you to doing good, start everything with good, and remember that for every

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[65] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/362.

good habit there is a means to develop it. The means of developing good is patience. If you are patient in bearing everything that befalls you or happens to you, you will gain fear of Allah. Remember that fear of Allah is a combination of two things: obeying Him and avoiding disobedience. Those who obey Him do so by hating this world and loving the Hereafter, and those who disobey Him do so by loving this world and hating the Hereafter. The signs of faith are instilled by Allah in the heart; some are hidden and some are visible. As for that which is visible, it is when the one who praises a person and the one who criticizes him on the basis of truth are the same to him. As for that which is hidden, it may be manifested in wisdom flowing from his heart on his tongue and people's love for him. Do not think little of how important it is for people to love you, for the Prophets asked that people should love them. When Allah loves a person He makes others love him too, and when He hates a person He makes others hate him too. You should think of your status before Allah by checking your status before the people who are with you in this cause."[66]

From this text we learn a number of things, including the following:

Adhering to the truth saves the Muslim from difficulties, because the one who adheres to the truth is with Allah, and if a person is with Allah, Allah will be with Him by His support and help. These feelings will give the Muslim a strong motivation to double his efforts and confront difficulties and hardships, in addition to peace of mind which is enjoyed by the one who adheres to the truth in word and deed. That is in contrast to the one who deviates from the path of truth, who feels anxious and suffers many kinds of pain, such as a guilty conscience and the fear that people will find him out, as well as the fear of unknown consequences of deviation.

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[66] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/306, 307.

'Umar stated that the means of attaining goodness is patience, because the path of goodness is not paved with carpets, rather it is rough and thorny, and travelling it requires a great deal of struggle (jihad). So the one who wants to travel this road must equip himself with patience, otherwise he will give up partway.

'Umar said that fear of Allah means obeying Him and avoiding disobedience, then he explained the greatest motive that will make a man obey Him, which is hatred of this world and love of the Hereafter. The greatest motive that makes a man disobey Allah is love of this world and hatred of the Hereafter.

Then he said that hearts have signs of faith, and he gave the example of dealing with people on the basis of truth when one is angry and when one is content. A man should not let people's praise make him try to please them by turning away from the truth, or let their criticism of him make him mistreat them or be unfair towards them.

'Umar stated that one of the hidden signs of faith in the heart is wisdom that flows from the Muslim's heart on his tongue, and that he is loved by his Muslim brothers. For Allah's love of His slave is connected to the Muslims' love for him; when Allah loves a person He makes him beloved to His slaves.[67] If Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, who the Prophet (ﷺ) had testified was one of the people of Paradise, needed this advice, then how about us, who have so much less understanding of Islam and are falling so far short in applying it?[68]

2.1.3. A *Khuṭbah* (sermon) by 'Umar (رضي الله عنه)

Sa'd went to Iraq, accompanied by four thousand *Mujâhideen*, or it was said that there were six thousand. 'Umar walked out with

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[67] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/364.

[68] Ibid, 10/365.

them to bid farewell from Şirâr as far as al-A'waş.[69] Then he stood up to address the people and said: "Allah sets similitudes for you, and uses different figures of speech to revive your hearts, for hearts are dead until Allah revives them. Whoever knows something, let him benefit from it, for there are signs and consequences of justice. Its signs are modesty, generosity, gentleness and softness, and its consequence is mercy. For every matter Allah has made a way of dealing with it and a means of achieving it. The door to justice is learning lessons, and its key is asceticism. Learning lessons means remembering death by thinking about the dead and preparing for death by sending on good deeds. Asceticism means taking dues from everyone who owes them and giving them to everyone who is entitled to them, without making any concession to anyone in that and being content with what is sufficient of basic necessities, for if a person is not content with the basic necessities, nothing will make him feel independent of means. Allah has obliged me to deal with supplications on His behalf, so bring your complaints to us. Whoever cannot do that should bring them to one who will convey them to us, and we will restore his rights without him having to do much."[70]

2.1.4. Sa'd's arrival in Iraq and the death of al-Muthanna

Sa'd travelled with his army until he stopped in a place called Zarood[71] in Najd. The caliph sent four thousand men as reinforcements, and Sa'd was able to mobilize a further seven thousand from Najd. Al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah ash-Shaybâni was

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[69] Al-A'was: On the road towards Iraq. It is where the airport of Madeenah is located today. [Author]

[70] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/308.

[71] Zarood: Sands between ath-Tha'labiyah and al-Khuzaymiyah on the pilgrims' route from Iraq.

waiting for him in Iraq with twelve thousand.

Sa'd stayed in Zarood, preparing for the decisive battle with the Persians, and waiting for the command of the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ). 'Umar took a keen interest in this battle and did not leave any commander, wise man, nobleman, powerful person, orator or poet but he sent them against the Persians. He sent the most prominent and powerful people against them.[72] Whilst Sa'd and his army were encamped in Zarood, al-Muthanna became gravely ill. The narrators say that the wounds he had received on the day of the bridge reopened and started bleeding, and he realized that the end was near. As his pain grew intense, he appointed Basheer ibn al-Khaṣâṣiyah to be in charge of those who were with him after he died. Al-Muthanna asked for his brother al-Mu'anna, and told him his last wishes, and asked him to convey them to Sa'd. Then al-Muthanna surrendered his soul to his Creator, and this sun that had filled the conquests of Iraq with bright light finally set.[73]

In his final advice to Sa'd, he told him not to fight his enemy and the enemy of the Muslims when they were mobilized to the fullest extent in their own land; rather he should fight them on the borders of their land, close to the land of the Arabs and close to refuge from the land of the Persians. If Allah granted the Muslims victory over the Persians, they would be able to capture all the land that lay behind them, and if the outcome was otherwise, they would be able to retreat and join the other Muslims. Then they would have better knowledge of the routes and would feel more courageous in their own land, until Allah turned things around in their favour.[74]

How similar were the last moments of al-Muthanna to the last

[72] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/310.

[73] *Al-Qâdisiyah* by Aḥmad 'Âdil Kamâl, p. 29.

[74] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/313.

moments of the caliph Abu Bakr (ﷺ). Both of them left this world when they were thinking of the Muslims and giving advice concerning conquests. Abu Bakr died when he was advising 'Umar and encouraging the people to conquer Iraq, and al-Muthanna died when he was passing on the fruits of his experience in war against the Persians to the new leader of the war in Iraq, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ. As he breathed his last, he was thinking, planning and giving advice to Sa'd.[75]

When the advice and suggestions of al-Muthanna reached Sa'd, he prayed for mercy for him, and issued instructions that al-Mu'anna ibn al-Ḥârithah be kept in his position, and that the members of his household be taken care of.[76] It is worth noting that al-Muthanna left instructions that his wife, Salma bint Khaṣfah at-Taymiyah should marry Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ; Sa'd proposed to her after her *'iddah* was over and married her. Did al-Muthanna want to be kind to his wife after he had passed away by letting her marry a great hero, one of the heroes of Islam whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had testified as one of the people of Paradise? Or was it that she was intelligent and wise, and had knowledge of her husband's experience in war, and he wanted to benefit the Muslims thereby? Both are possible. This is a small example of the abundant virtues of that great generation.[77]

2.1.5. Sa'd's march to Iraq and 'Umar's advice

The command came from the caliph to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (may Allah be pleased with them) to set out from Zarood to Iraq in preparation for the decisive battle with the Persians. 'Umar also sent

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[75] *Al-Qâdisiyah* by Aḥmad 'Âdil Kamâl, p. 30.

[76] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/313.

[77] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/370, 371.

the following advice:

"I am ordering you and the troops who are with you to fear Allah in all circumstances, for fear of Allah is the best weapon against the enemy and the strongest weapon in war. I am commanding you and those who are with you to be more careful in avoiding sin than in avoiding your enemy, for the sins of the army are to be feared more than their enemy. The Muslims are supported by their enemy's disobedience towards Allah; were it not for that, we would not have any strength, for our numbers are not like theirs and our weapons are not like theirs. If we were equally matched in sin, they would have an advantage over us in strength, and if we did not have an advantage over them by our virtue, we would not be able to defeat them by our strength. Remember that you have over you protectors from Allah who know what you are doing, so feel shy before them and do not do any act of disobedience towards Allah. You are (striving) for the sake of Allah; do not say that our enemy is worse than us and will never prevail over us even if will commit sin. A people may be defeated by others who are worse than them, just as the Children of Israel were defeated by the *kâfir* Magians when they did deeds that angered Allah, and,

﴾... They entered the very innermost parts of your homes. And it was a promise [completely] fulfilled.﴿ *(Qur'an 17: 5)*

Ask Allah for help against your evil whims and desires just as you ask Him for help against your enemies. I ask Allah for that, for us and for you. Be kind to the Muslims on their march. Do not exhaust them on their march, lest they reach their enemy weakened from their journey, for they are marching towards an enemy that has not been travelling, that has strong horses and riders. You and those who are with you should rest for one day and night every week, so that they will be able to regain their strength and lay down their weapons and

belongings. Do not camp near the towns of people who have a treaty with us or are under our protection, and do not let any of your companions interact with them except those whose religious commitment you are confident of. Do not annoy any of the townspeople at all, for they are protected and you are being tested with regard to fulfilment of the treaty, just as they are being tested with regard to their patience in adhering to it. So long as they are keeping their promise to you, keep your promise to them. Do not seek victory against your enemies by oppressing those with whom you have a treaty. When you reach the closest point of enemy land, spend out spies, for none of their affairs should be hidden from you. You should have with you Arabs and local people whom you trust and who you feel are sincere, for the news of a liar will be of no benefit to you, even if he tells the truth sometimes. The dishonest one is a spy against you, not for you. When you draw closer to the enemy's land you should send out scouts and raiding parties to cut their supply lines and try to find out their weak points. Choose people of wisdom and strength among your companions for these missions, and choose the best horses. If they see the enemy the best way to deal with them is by means of good advice from these people. Put the people of jihad, patience and toughness in charge of these raiding parties, and do not show favour to anyone on the basis of whims and desires, because this may affect the whole affair and lead to bad consequences. Do not send any scouts or raiding parties in a direction in which you fear they may be exposed to danger. If you sight the enemy, then bring back your scouts and troops. But do not hasten to engage in fighting unless you are forced to, until you have had the opportunity to find out their fatal weak points and have studied the land until you know it as well as its people do. If any prisoner is brought to you with whom you do not have a treaty, you should execute him so as to strike fear into your enemies and the enemies of Allah. Allah is the best disposer of affairs for you and those who are

with you; He is the One Who grants victory to you over your enemy, and Allah is the One Whose help we seek."[78]

This great speech contains useful advice and shows us an important aspect of 'Umar's greatness, namely his great experience in military planning. Divine help and guidance can clearly be seen in all his commands and advice.[79] We can sum up some of the important principles included in this advice, as follows:

- Commanding the army to fear Allah and be dutiful to Him in all situations. This is regarded as the primary weapon, and sin is regarded as the primary enemy, after which comes the *kâfir* enemy.
- Drawing attention to the fact that there were angels keeping a close and constant watch over the Islamic army, and pointing out the importance of feeling too shy before them to commit sin, because it makes no sense for a man to commit sin when he is in the battlefield fighting in jihad for the sake of Allah.
- Affirming that it is quite incorrect to take the enemy's behaviour as a standard to justify the behaviour of the Muslim army.
- Bearing in mind the constant need for Allah's help.

The second principle which was affirmed in 'Umar's letter to Sa'd is:

- Thinking constantly of Allah; emphasizing the sanctity of the towns whose people have a peace treaty with the Muslims and taking means to guarantee that their safety is not violated; protecting the Muslim image from any bad reflection that could affect the success of communication between Muslims and non-Muslims, by punishing crooked behaviour on the part of some Muslim individuals.

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[78] *Al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by Muhammad Rasheed Riḍa, Pp. 119, 120.

[79] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/374.

In an effort to achieve this principle, 'Umar ordered his commander to pay attention to the means that could help to keep the army's morale high and help it to reach the land of the enemy still able to fight. He said: "Be kind to the Muslims during their march... so that they will be able to regain their strength and lay down their weapons and belongings." After affirming the importance of protecting and ensuring the safety of the troops and weapons of the Muslim army, 'Umar pointed out that prevention is better than cure, and that one of the most important weapons of the army is to appear with proper Islamic behaviour, in which words and deeds are in harmony. As a precaution, 'Umar forbade the army to camp near the towns of people with whom the Muslims had peace treaties, so as to avoid the possibility of some transgression that could negatively affect the relationships he wanted to establish, and so as not to allow anyone except those who were trustworthy to enter the towns, to ensure that the treaty would not be violated and to oblige the people to adhere to it.

'Umar's letter also pointed to a third principle, which was:

- ❖ Using different methods of dealing with people, depending on their relationship with the Muslims, and not burdening them with more than they could bear. 'Umar asked his commander not to oppress or mistreat the people with whom the Muslims had treaties for the sake of seeking victory over those with whom they were at war, and to seek the help of those whom he trusted of the people in regions that were close to the regions of conquest, on the basis that there should be some trust and confidence, i.e., he should be careful not to give full trust and not to go to extremes in trusting.

The fourth principle is gathering sufficient information about the enemy:

- 'Umar drew attention to the importance of relying on scouts from the best elements of the army in gathering information, and equipping them with the best weapons that the army possesses. That is because the enemy may discover them and force them to fight, so they should be strong and powerful so that they can create the desired psychological impact on the enemy, making them think that the army is strong and giving an impression of using force.

The fifth and last principle mentioned in 'Umar's letter is appointing the right man for the job:

- The aim of gathering information about the enemy is not so much for the purpose of fighting them as it is a precaution in case the other side forces the Muslims to fight. Hence after taking the means, the Muslims should refrain from fighting, but be prepared for that if necessary, whilst taking the utmost precautions.[80]

2.1.6. Seeking the help of former apostates who had repented

During the Riddah wars and the conquests, Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (ﷺ) did not seek the help of any former apostate, but 'Umar mobilized them after they repented and set their affairs straight, and acquired some Islamic education, but he did not appoint any of them to a position of authority.[81] According to one report, he said to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ concerning Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi and 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib az-Zubaydi: "Seek their help, but do not appoint them over one hundred (men)."[82] What we learn from the

[80] *Ad-Dawr as-Siyâsi li'l-Ṣafwah fee Ṣadr al-Islâm*, p. 429.

[81] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/375.

[82] Ibid.

actions of the two caliphs Abu Bakr and 'Umar[83] is that if a person apostatizes from Islam then repents and comes back, his repentance is accepted and his blood and wealth are protected; he has the same rights and duties as all other Muslims, except that he is not to be appointed to any position of authority over the Muslims' affairs, especially in matters of leadership. That is because it is possible that his repentance may be hypocritical, and if that is the case and he is appointed to a position of authority and leadership, he will cause great mischief in the land and upset the balance of life; he will bring in others who are like him of the hypocrites and push away the sincere believers, and the Islamic society will become a society that is dominated by the characteristics of *Jâhiliyah.* This wise policy of these two Rightly-Guided Caliphs was aimed at protecting the Muslim society from evildoers sneaking in to positions of leadership. Perhaps the reason for this policy was also a means of making the punishment go against what they (the former apostates) had tried to achieve and of deterring anyone who might be tempted to rebel against Islamic principles and seek a position of leadership by means of opposing Islam and befriending the enemies of the faith.[84]

2.1.7. A letter from the caliph to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ received a letter from 'Umar whilst he was camping in Shirâf, on the border of Iraq, ordering him to march towards Persia. In this letter it said: "March from Shirâf towards Persia, with the Muslims who are with you. Put your trust in Allah and seek His help in all your affairs. Remember that you are going towards a nation whose numbers are great and whose weapons are superior; they are tough people in a forbidding land, which although

[83] *Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Manâqib 'Umar,* chapter 52, hadith no. 3742.

[84] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/376.

it is a plain will be difficult to conquer because there are many lakes, running water and vast valleys. Unless you meet small groups of them, if you encounter the people or some of them, then strike them first. Beware of giving them time to wait for reinforcements after the first confrontation. Do not be deceived, because they are cheaters and deceivers. You have to take them very seriously and deal with them in a decisive manner. When you reach al-Qâdisiyah[85], set up posts at the edge of al-Qâdisiyah and let the people (i.e. the Muslims) be between the wilderness and the inhabited land, on the plain between the two. Then stay where you are and do not leave, for if they realize that you are there, they will strike you with all their might, with their cavalry and infantry. If you show patience in facing your enemy and seek reward with Allah when fighting him, intending to do your duty, then I have great hope that you will prevail over them. After that, they will never again be able to assemble such a huge army, and if they do, they will be in such a state of fear that they will lose courage. If the outcome is otherwise, then you will have the wilderness behind you and you can depart from the closest inhabited part of their land to the closest uninhabited part of your land, where you will feel more confident and have more knowledge of the land, and they will be more fearful."

This advice concerning the choice of land where the army was to settle is similar to the advice given by al-Muthanna to Sa'd. 'Umar and al-Muthanna were agreed on the choice of land. Al-Muthanna's advice was the result of more than three years experience of war against the Persians. This is indicative of 'Umar's brilliance in military planning, even though he had never set foot in Iraq. This advice also urged the army to keep away from the enemy's reach whilst sending raiding parties to harass them and incite their

[85] Al-Qâdisiyah was the gateway to Persia during the *Jâhiliyah*.

followers against them, until the Muslims could bring them to a place of their own choosing for the major battle.[86]

2.1.8. Spiritual means of victory according to 'Umar (ﷺ)

'Umar wrote to Sa'd, reminding him of the spiritual means of victory, which were the most important. In his letter he said: "Pay a great deal of attention to your heart (spiritual well-being). Talk to your troops, exhort them and remind them of the importance of good intentions and of checking on themselves. Patience, patience, for the help of Allah comes in accordance with good intentions, and the reward comes in accordance with how much one checks oneself. Be careful as you are on this mission for His sake, ask Allah to keep you safe and sound, and frequently repeat the words *Lâ hawla wa lâ quwwata illa Billâh* — there is no power and no strength except with Allah." Write and tell me where you have reached with your army, for my lack of knowledge of your situation and that of your enemy is keeping me from writing some of the things I wanted to write. Describe to us the routes of the Muslims and the land that lies between you and al-Madâ'in, so that it is as if I can see it, and give me a clear picture of your situation. Fear Allah and put your hope in Him, and do not take anything for granted. Remember that Allah has made a promise to you. Put your trust in Allah with regard to the mission you are embarking on, and beware lest you be removed from this position and replaced with someone else."[87]

In this letter, 'Umar advised Sa'd to pay attention to the heart (spiritual well-being), for the heart is the engine of the body; if it is sound the entire body will be sound. Then he advised him to exhort

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[86] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/379.

[87] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/315.

his troops and remind them to be sincere towards Allah and to seek reward with Him. He explained that the help of Allah is connected to that, and he warned him against being negligent towards the responsibility that he had undertaken and the conquests that lay ahead. He reminded them of the importance of being connected to Allah and that their strength was connected to His. He advised the Muslim commander to tread a path between fear of Allah and hope for that which is with Him. This is an important attitude which reflects a deep understanding of *Tawḥeed*. He told him not to take anything for granted because of some righteous deed that he did or because some people praised him. And he reminded him that Allah had promised victory to the Muslims and the destruction of *kufr*. He warned him against being negligent concerning any means of victory, for victory might not be granted to him, rather it might be granted to others whom Allah chose.[88]

2.1.9. Sa'd's description of the location of al-Qâdisiyah to 'Umar and 'Umar's response

Sa'd wrote to 'Umar (ﷺ) describing to him the land where he expected the decisive battle to take place. He said: "All of those who have entered into peace treaties with the Muslims in the land between the two rivers are supporting the Persians. They have submitted to them and are preparing to fight us. The one whom they have chosen to fight us is Rustam, among others like him. They are trying to annoy us and make us engage in skirmishes, and we are trying to annoy them and provoke them. The decree of Allah will inevitably come to pass and His will is to be submitted to, whether it is in our favour or not. We ask Allah to keep us safe and sound."[89]

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[88] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/379.

[89] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/38.

'Umar wrote to him, saying: "I have received and understood your letter. Stay where you are until Allah brings your enemy to you, and remember that this confrontation is going to be decisive. If Allah enables you to defeat them, do not stop there, carry on until you conquer al-Madâ'in, for it will be destroyed if Allah wills."[90]

From 'Umar's letter it is clear that he had taken the right decision, which was that Sa'd should stay put and not leave his position. He should not hasten to fight the enemy, rather he should leave it to the enemy to initiate the fighting. He should invest his victory by pursuing the enemy to al-Madâ'in and conquering it.[91] At the same time he should take the material means necessary to achieving victory.

'Umar did not ignore the spiritual aspects of the matter. He launched a psychological war against the enemy in their own land, the seat of their rule and power. He sent word to Sa'd saying: "I have a strong feeling that when you meet the enemy you will defeat them. Then if any one of you makes a gesture or speaks a word of safety (to one of the Persians) then this man should be granted security, because even if it is done by mistake, fulfilling the promise is a means of achieving victory and breaking a promise, even if it is done by mistake, is a means that leads to defeat, which will weaken you and strengthen your enemy."[92]

It is as if 'Umar was living with the Muslim army with all his senses. He became so worried that he could not enjoy life or relax until he had heard news of them. In such cases inspiration from Allah was a means of reducing the great burden that 'Umar had undertaken, and a means of making the Muslims steadfast and strengthening their

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[90] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah,* 7/38.

[91] *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi,* p. 253.

[92] *Itmâm al-Wafa' fee Seerat al-Khulafâ',* p. 73.

hearts. We see that 'Umar reminded the Muslims of some of the spiritual means by urging them to adhere to the word of honour, to be truthful in speech and to fulfil promises, even if that was granted by an individual Muslim, or if there had been a misunderstanding and the Muslim did not intend to grant security but the enemy understood it as such.[93]

2.2. 'Umar asked Sa'd to send a delegation to debate with the Persian king

'Umar said to Sa'd in his letters: "Do not feel distressed by what you hear about them and what they come up with. Seek the help of Allah and put your trust in Him. Send to him some men of wisdom and courage to call them to Allah." 'Umar asked Sa'd to write to him every day[94]. Sa'd started to gather some men of wisdom and courage. Those whom he chose were men of understanding and wisdom:

1. An-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin al-Muzani
2. Bisr ibn Abi Rahm al-Juhani
3. Ḥamlah ibn Juwayh al-Kinâni
4. Ḥandhalah ibn ar-Rabee' at-Tameemi
5. Furât ibn Ḥayyân al-'Ajali
6. 'Adiyy ibn Suhayl
7. Al-Mugheerah ibn Zarârah ibn an-Nabâsh ibn Ḥabeeb[95]

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[93] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/381.

[94] See: *al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/38.

[95] See: *Ad-Da'wah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by Ḥusni Muhammad Ibrâheem.

'Umar chose a group who were dignified and good-looking, and who had deep insight:

1. 'Aṭârid ibn Ḥâjib at-Tameemi
2. Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindi
3. Al-Ḥârith ibn Ḥassân adh-Dhuhali
4. 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi
5. 'Amr ibn Ma'di Karib az-Zubaydi
6. Al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah ath-Thaqafi
7. Al-Mu'anna ibn Ḥârithah ash-Shaybâni[96]

These were fourteen *dâ'iyahs* whom Sa'd sent to call the king of Persia to Islam, acting on the orders of 'Umar (ﷺ). They were leaders of their people, as 'Umar (ﷺ) wanted, who would be able to call Yazdagird with wisdom and beautiful preaching, in a way that is best, in the hope that Allah might guide him and his troops to Islam and thus avoid bloodshed on both sides. This carefully selected delegation was of a high caliber and able for the task for which they had been appointed. In addition to the qualities that they enjoyed of good looks, dignity and wisdom, they also had previous knowledge of the Persians. Some of them had fought them, defeated them and engaged in battles with them in previous campaigns, some of them had gone in delegations to the Persian kings during the *Jâhiliyah*, and some of them know the Persian language. It is as if Sa'd chose them for this delegation after they had passed a kind of test to prove that they were qualified for the mission, as well as a kind of physical exam to determine their strengths and weaknesses, and their level of fitness and good looks.[97]

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[96] See: *Al-Kâmil fee at-Târeekh,* 2/101.
[97] See: *Al-Qâdisiyah* by Aḥmad 'Âdil Kamâl, p. 70.

This blessed delegation, led by an-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin, reached al-Madâ'in and entered to meet the Persian king Yazdagird, who asked them, through his translator: "What brought you here? What motivated you to invade us and penetrate so deeply into our land? Is it because we were distracted from you that you were encouraged to attack us?" An-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin spoke on their behalf, and said: "Allah had mercy on us and sent to us a Messenger who commanded us to do good and forbade us to do evil, and promised us, if we responded, the good of this world and the Hereafter. There was no tribe but some of them responded and others did not. Then he commanded us to start with those of the Arabs who opposed him, so we started with them, and they either joined him unwillingly then became happy that they had joined him, or they joined him willingly and were blessed. We all recognized the superiority of what he brought over what we had been living with of enmity and hardship. Then he commanded us to start with the nations that were closest to us, and we called them to justice. We are calling you to our religion, which is a religion that recognizes what is good and confirms it as such, and recognizes what is evil and confirms it as such. If you refuse, then you may choose one of the bad options rather than the worst option: *jizyah*, but if you refuse, then fighting. If you respond to our religion, we will leave with you the Book of Allah, on condition that you rule by its rulings, and we will leave you and let you run your affairs in your land. If you pay the *jizyah* we will accept it from you and leave you to run your own affairs. If you pay the *jizyah* we will accept it from you and will protect you, otherwise we will fight you."

The Persian king Yazdagird said: "I do not know of any nation on earth that was more miserable and fewer in number and more divided than you. We used to delegate some of the tribes on the border to take care of you. You never hoped to stand up to Persia. If you think you can defeat us, that is folly on your part. If you are going

through hardship, we will give you some food until things get easier, and we will honour your leaders and clothe you, and we will appoint a king to be kind to you."

Al-Mugheerah ibn Zarârah stood up and said: "As for what you have said about our bad situation, that is true and it was even worse than that," and he mentioned the miserable life of the Arabs and how Allah had showed mercy to them by sending the Prophet (ﷺ), as an-Nu'mân had said. Then he said: "Choose, either pay the *jizyah* with willing submission, and feel yourselves subdued (cf. Qur'an 9: 29) or fight, or else save yourselves by becoming Muslims."

Yazdagird said: "Were it not that envoys are not to be killed, I would have killed you. I have nothing for you." Then he ordered that a load of dust be brought and he told his people: "Put this on their nobles, and drive them out of al-Madâ'in." 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr stood up and said: "I am the noblest of them," and he took the dust and went out to his mount and rode off. When he reached Sa'd he said to him, "Be of good cheer, for by Allah, Allah has given us the keys to their kingdom."[98] Then Rustam came out with his huge army, one hundred thousand strong or more, from Sâbâṭ. When he passed by Kootha — a town between al-Madâ'in and Bâbil — he met an Arab man. Rustam asked him: "What brought you here? What do you want from us?" He said, "We have come seeking the promise of Allah, that we will take possession of your land and sons if you refuse to submit." Rustam said, "Then we are placed under your control." The Arab said, "Your deeds let you down, so Allah put you under our control. Do not be deceived by what you see around you, for you are not confronting people, rather you are confronting the divine decree!" Rustam got angry with him and killed him. When his army passed al-Baras — a town between al-Koofah and al-Ḥillah, they

[98] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/43.

seized its people and its wealth, and drank wine, and raped the women. The people of al-Baras complained to Rustam and he said to his people: "By Allah, that Arab spoke the truth. By Allah, nothing let us down but our own deeds. By Allah, even though they are in a state of war, the Arabs treated these people better than you are treating them."[99]

When Sa'd, the commander of the Muslim army, got news of Rustam, he sent 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib az-Zubaydi and Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid, along with ten other men, to find out about the army. They had not gone very far when they saw the enemy camp spread out along the banks of the river. They all went back apart from Ṭulayḥah, who continued until he had penetrated deeply among the enemy and gathered more information. Then he went back to Sa'd and told him what he had found out. This Ṭulayḥah had been one of the leaders of the apostates, but 'Umar allowed the Arabs who had apostatized and then repented to join the jihad, whereas Abu Bakr had not allowed that. But 'Umar did not allow those former leaders of apostasy who went out for jihad after having repented to be appointed to positions of leadership. He was keen for them to be disciplined and to learn the meanings of faith and piety, and he gave them valuable opportunities to express the sincerity of their faith and piety. Ṭulayḥah al-Asadi and 'Amr az-Zubaydi played an important role in the wars in Iraq and Persia.

2.3. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ sent delegations to call Rustam to Islam

Rustam travelled with his army from al-Ḥeerah until he reached al-Qâdisiyah at the bridge called al-'Ateeq, facing the

[99] *Itmâm al-Wafa' fee Seerat al-Khulafa'*, p. 57.

Muslim camp, with the river in between them. The Persians had thirty-three elephants with them. When they camped, he sent word to Sa'd saying, "Send us a man with whom we may speak." He sent Rab'i ibn 'Âmir, who came to him and found him sitting on a throne of gold, with carpets and cushions interwoven with gold thread. Rab'i came riding his horse, with his sword in a sheath of cloth and his spear tied around with cloth. When he reached the carpets, he made his horse step over them, then he dismounted and tied his horse with two pillows that he tore apart. Then he took the saddlecloth and wrapped it around himself (like a cloak). They gestured to him that he should put down his weapon. He said, "If I had come to you on my own initiative, I would do what you ask, but you are the ones who called me." Then he came, leaning on his spear and taking small steps so as to do more damage to the carpet on which he was walking. When he came near to Rustam, he sat on the ground and stuck his spear into the carpet, and said, "We do not sit on your furniture." Rustam asked him: "What brought you here?" He said, "Allah brought us here. He has sent us to bring whomsoever He wills from the worship of other people to the worship of Allah, from the constriction of this world to its ease, and from the injustice of other religions to the justice of Islam. He sent to us His Messenger, bringing His religion to His creation. Whoever accepts it, we will accept that and leave him and his land alone, but whoever refuses, we will fight him until we end up either in Paradise or in victory."[100]

Rustam said: "We have heard what you said. Can you give us some time to think about it?" He said, "Yes, one of the things that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) taught us is not to give the enemies more than three days. So we will leave you alone for three days. Think about it and choose one of three options: either become Muslim, and

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[100] *Al-Kâmil fee at-Târeekh*, 2/106.

we will leave you and your land alone; or pay the *jizyah* and we will accept it and leave you alone, and if you need us we will come to your help; or fight on the fourth day, unless you start it before then. I guarantee that to you on behalf of my companions." Rustam asked, "Are you their leader?" He said, "No, but the Muslims are like a single body, part of one another, and the highest of them accepts a commitment made by the lowest of them."

Then he went away, and Rustam consulted with his companions and said, "Have you ever heard anything like what this man has said?" They tried to make little of him, but Rustam said: "Woe to you, I am thinking of his wisdom, eloquence and behaviour. The Arabs do not care about clothes but they pay a great deal of attention to lineage."

On the second day, he sent word to Sa'd asking him, "Send this man to us again." But he sent Ḥudhayfah ibn Miḥṣan al-Ghalfâni, who did not say or do anything different than Rab'i had, and no wonder, for they were cast from the same mould, namely the religion of Islam. Rustam said to him: "Why didn't the first one come to us?" He said, "Our commander treats us equally in times of hardship and times of ease, and today it is my turn." Rustam said, "How long do we have?" He said, "Three days, starting from yesterday."

On the third day, he sent word to Sa'd saying, "Send us a man." So he sent al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah to him. He went to him and sat with him on his throne, but the courtiers rushed to him and pulled him away. He said to them, "We used to hear a great deal about your wisdom, but I have never seen any people more foolish than you. We Arabs do not enslave one another. We thought that you treated one another equally as we do. I wish that you had told me that some of you act like the masters of others. You cannot continue like this, for a kingdom based on such an attitude cannot last." The

common folk said, "The Arab is speaking the truth, by Allah." The chieftains — the leaders of the peasants — said: "This is the kind of idea that our slaves are longing to hear. May Allah curse our predecessors, for they kept making little of this nation." Then Rustam spoke in a belittling manner of the Arabs, and exaggerated about the Persians, mentioning the miserable and difficult lives that they (the Arabs) led.[101]

Al-Mugheerah said: "As for what you have said about our miserable situation and division, we admit it and do not deny it. But things in this world do not last forever, and after hardship comes ease. If you did give thanks for what Allah has given you, your gratitude was too little in comparison to what you were given. Your lack of gratitude led to the decline in your situation. Allah sent among us a Messenger", then he said something similar to what the others had said, and he concluded by giving them the choice between accepting Islam, paying the *jizyah* or fighting.[102]

Rustam consulted with the Persians and said, "Who are they in comparison to you? The first two came and boldly figured you out, then this one came with the same approach. They have all followed the same method and acted in the same way. By Allah, these are real men whether they are sincere or are liars. By Allah, if their discipline and their way of keeping secrets has reached such a level that they all have the same approach, never differing, there are no people who are able to achieve what they want like them. If they are sincere, no one will be able to stand up to them." Then the people started shouting and arguing.

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[101] See: *al-Kâmil fee at-Târeekh,* 2/108.

[102] Ibid.

2.4. Preparation for battle

The Persians were not convinced by this call, and they got carried away in their stubbornness that Allah might accomplish a matter already ordained (cf. Qur'an 8: 42). The Persians gathered to fight, and the Muslims prepared themselves for that. The Persians crossed the river at al-'Ateeq, and Rustam drew up his huge army in the following order:

- At the core: Dhu al-Ḥâjib, with eighteen elephants carrying boxes and men
- To the right of the core: al-Jâlinus
- On the right flank: al-Hormuzân, with seven or eight elephants carrying boxes and men
- To the left of the core: al-Beerazân
- On the left flank: Mahrân, with seven or eight elephants carrying boxes and men

Rustam sent a detachment of cavalry to the bridge to prevent the Muslims from crossing over towards his army, so the bridge was between two cavalries, that of the Muslims and that of the *mushrikeen*. The ranks were drawn up as follows:

The cavalry in the first rank, followed by the elephants, then the infantry. A huge canopy was set up for Rustam, beneath which he was shaded on his throne, where he sat watching the progress of the battle.[103] The Muslims were fully prepared to fight. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ had prepared his army early on, appointing commanders and leaders. He appointed men who were known for their virtue to carry the banners, and he organized the vanguard, rearguard and two

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[103] *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, p. 255.

flanks, as well as the scouts. He had reached al-Qâdisiyah in a state of readiness. He organized his army in the following manner:

- In the vanguard: Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah
- On the right flank: 'Abdullâh ibn al-Mu'tamm
- On the left flank: Shuraḥbeel ibn as-Samṭ al-Kindi, with Khâlid ibn 'Urfuṭah as his deputy
- In the rearguard: 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr
- In charge of the scouts: Sawâd ibn Mâlik
- In charge of the cavalry: Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili
- In charge of the infantry: Ḥammâl ibn Mâlik al-Asadi
- In charge of the riders: 'Abdullâh ibn Dhi as-Sahamayn al-Ḥanafi
- To judge between them: 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili
- The scribe of the army: Ziyâd ibn Abi Sufiyân
- At the head of the army as their spokesman: Salmân al-Fârisi. All of this was done on 'Umar's instructions.[104]

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ addressed the people and recited the following verse:

﴾And indeed We have written in *az-Zaboor* [i.e. all the revealed Holy Books — the *Tawrât* (Torah), the *Injeel* (Gospel), the Psalms and the Qur'an] after [We have already written in] *al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfoodh* [the Book that is in the heaven with Allah] that My righteous slaves shall inherit the land.﴿ *(Qur'an 21: 105)*

He ordered the readers to start reciting *Soorah al-Anfâl*, which they did. The people were deeply moved and a sense of tranquillity

[104] *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, p. 255.

descended upon them. The people prayed *Dhuhr*, then Sa'd ordered his army to advance after the fourth *takbeer*, and to say, "*Lâ hawla wa la quwwata illa Billâh* — there is no power and no strength except with Allah."

The battle lasted for four days. Sa'd was ill with sciatica and abscesses that made him unable to ride or sit, so he lay on his chest on a pillow, looking out over the battlefield from the fort of Qudays which was in al-Qâdisiyah. He had delegated Khâlid ibn 'Urfuṭah to convey his orders to the people, and he ordered that it be called out to the army: "Envy is not allowed except in jihad for the sake of Allah, O' people, so envy one another in jihad."[105]

Before the fighting began, there was a dispute about Khâlid ibn 'Urfuṭah, the deputy of Sa'd. Sa'd said: "Carry me and put me where I can see the people." So they lifted him up, and he lay looking out over them, with the ranks at the bottom of the wall of the fort of Qudays. He gave instructions to Khâlid, and Khâlid gave instruction to the people. He was one of those for whom some of the prominent people had tried to cause trouble, so Sa'd punished them and rebuked them. He said: "By Allah, were it not that your enemy is there, I would have made an example of you." He detained them, including Abu Miḥjan ath-Thaqafi, and chained them up in the fort. Jareer ibn 'Abdullâh said, confirming the importance of obeying one's leader, "As for me, I gave my oath of allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), pledging to hear and obey whomever Allah put in charge, even if he was an Abyssinian slave." Sa'd said: "By Allah, if anyone causes similar trouble after this, distracting the Muslims from their enemies when they are in front of them, I will set a precedent in punishing him."[106]

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105 *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari,* 4/356.

106 Ibid.

After this incident, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ stood up and addressed them. After praising and glorifying Allah, he said: "Allah is the Truth and has no partner or associate in His Dominion, and His promise is never broken. Allah (ﷻ) says: ﴾And indeed We have written in *az-Zaboor* [i.e. all the revealed Holy Books — the *Tawrât* (Torah), the *Injeel* (Gospel), the Psalms, the Qur'an] after [We have already written in] *al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfoodh* [the Book that is in the heaven with Allah] that My righteous slaves shall inherit the land.﴿ *(Qur'an 21: 105)* This is your inheritance which your Lord has promised you. Allah put this land under your control three years ago and your have been eating of its food until today, as a result of the efforts of those who fought before you. Now this gathering of them has come to you, but you are the leaders of the Arabs and the best of each tribe, the pride of those who are behind you. If you show disinterest in worldly gains and hope for the Hereafter, Allah will bless you with reward in this world and in the Hereafter. This jihad is not going to bring anyone closer to his appointed time of death. If you fail and grow weak, you will lose out in this world and will be doomed in the Hereafter."[107]

Sa'd wrote to those who were carrying the banners: "I have appointed Khâlid ibn 'Urfuṭah in charge of you. Nothing is preventing me from being in his place but the pain which keeps bothering me and the abscesses I have. I am lying on my front where I can see you, so listen to him and obey him, for he is passing on my instructions and following my commands." This letter was read to the people, and they were content with it and accepted his opinion, encouraging one another to hear and obey. They accepted Sa'd's excuse and agreed with his actions.[108] Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ remained at the top of the fort, looking out over the battlefield. The fort was not

[107] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/357.

[108] Ibid, 4/358.

fortified, and this is indicative of the courage of Sa'd (ﷺ). It was narrated that 'Uthmân ibn Rajâ' as-Sa'di said: "Sa'd ibn Mâlik was the bravest and most daring of people, for he stayed in a fort that was not fortified in order to observe the two armies, looking out over the people. If the Muslims had retreated even a little, the fort would have been exposed and the enemy could have captured it. But by Allah, he never got worried or scared during the terror of those days."[109]

Rustam became nervous when he heard the adhân

When Rustam stopped at an-Najaf, he sent a spy to the Muslim camp, who managed to penetrate their ranks at al-Qâdisiyah. He saw them using the *miswak* at the time of every prayer, then praying, after which they would separate and go back to their places. He went back to Rustam and told him about them and their behaviour. Rustam asked him: "What do they eat?" He said, "I stayed among them for a night, and by Allah I did not see any one of them eating anything, apart from some sticks that they sucked on in the evening, when they slept and in the early morning." When he moved on, he camped between al-Ḥuṣn and al-'Ateeq.[110] When he came close to them, the *mu'adh-dhin* of Sa'd was giving the call for *Fajr* prayer, and he saw them preparing to get up. He called out to the Persians, telling them to ride. He was asked why, and he said, "Do you not see that a call was given to your enemy and they are getting ready for you?" That spy of his said, "No, they are getting ready to pray."[111]

When they crossed the river and stopped, the *mu'adh-dhin* of Sa'd was giving the call for *Dhuhr* prayer. Sa'd prayed, and Rustam said: " 'Umar is killing me."[112]

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[109] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi,* 10/347.

[110] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/358.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid.

Raising morale among the Muslim ranks

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ gathered the leaders and commanders of the Muslims at the beginning of the first day of the battle and said to them: "Go and speak to the people as you should at times of war, because you hold a prominent position among the Arabs, and you are the poets and orators of the Arabs, people of wisdom and leaders." So they went around among the people, reminding them and exhorting them to fight.[113]

❖ Qays ibn Hubayrah al-Asadi said: "O' people, praise Allah for what He has guided you to and for His blessing, and that will increase. Remember the blessings of Allah and beseech Him. For Paradise or booty lie before you. There is nothing but wilderness and barren land beyond this fort, a vast and rugged land that cannot be crossed."

❖ Ghâlib ibn 'Abdullâh al-Laythi said: "O' people, praise Allah for His blessing and ask Him for more. Call on Him and He will respond. O' people of Mu'add, what will your response be today when you have with you your horses and swords? Think of what people will say of you tomorrow, for you will be at the forefront tomorrow."

❖ Busr ibn Abi Rahm al-Juhani said: "Praise Allah and confirm your words with actions. You have praised Allah for what He has guided you to, and you have affirmed His Oneness and that there is no god beside Him. You have magnified Him and believed in His Prophet and Messengers. Do not die except as Muslims. Nothing should be less significant in your eyes than worldly gain, for worldly gain comes to those who think little of it. Do not incline towards it, for it will run away from you

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[113] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/359.

and mislead you. Support (the cause of) Allah and He will support you."

❖ 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr said: "O' Arabs, you are the leaders of the Arabs and you are confronting the leaders of the Persians. What is at stake is nothing less than Paradise. They should not be more eager for this world than you are for Paradise."

❖ Rabee' ibn al-Bilâd as-Sa'di said: "O' Arabs, fight for your faith and for worldly gain. ﴾And march forth in the way [which leads to] forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for *al-Muttaqoon* [the pious, righteous].﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 133)*"[114]

❖ Rab'i ibn 'Âmir said: "Allah has guided you to Islam and has united you therein and shown you victory. In patience there is comfort, so accustom yourselves to patience and you will get used to it. Do not accustom yourselves to panic and let it become a habit."

And all of them spoke similar words.[115]

2.4.1. The day of Armâth

The day of Armâth dawned on the first day of al-Qâdisiyah. Sa'd gave his instructions to the army, saying: "Stay where you are and do not move until you have prayed Dhuhr. When you have prayed Dhuhr, I will say *takbeer*, so say *takbeer* and get ready. Remember that *takbeer* was not given to anyone before you, and it was only given to you as a support for you. Then when you hear the second *takbeer*, say *takbeer*, and be ready. When I say the third *takbeer*, say *takbeer* and let your horsemen go forth against the

[114] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/359.
[115] Ibid, 4/360.

enemy. When I say the fourth *takbeer*, then all march forth until you meet your enemy, and say *Lâ hawla wa lâ quwwata illa Billâh* - there is no power and no strength except with Allah."[116]

When Sa'd had prayed *Dhuhr*, he ordered the slave whom 'Umar had told to stay with him, who was well versed in Qur'an, to recite the *Soorah* of jihad (i.e., *Soorah al-Anfâl*). He recited the *Soorah* of jihad to the squadron that was closest to him, and it was recited to every other squadron too. It raised the people's morale and they were filled with tranquillity when it was recited to them.[117] When the readers had finished, Sa'd said *takbeer*, and those who were around him said *takbeer* in response to his *takbeer*, and the people said *takbeer* in response to one another's *takbeers*, and the people moved forward. Then he said the second *takbeer* and the people got ready. Then he said the third *takbeer* and some horsemen went forward to fight. Men of similar rank from among the Persians came out to meet them and they exchanged blows.[118] The Muslim champions, such as Ghâlib ibn 'Abdullâh al-Asadi, 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, 'Amr ibn Ma'di Karib az-Zubaydi, and Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi, had a great impact, dealing a heavy blow to the enemy by killing some and capturing some of the enemy's champions, whereas none of the Muslims were killed during the single combat. Single combat is one of the most difficult arts of war, which only a few champions among men do well. It boosts the morale of the victors and increases their courage, and it demoralizes the losers and makes them lose heart. The early Muslims excelled in this art and were always superior to others, hence they were the ones who benefited from it.[119] Whilst the people were waiting for the

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[116] Op. cit., 4/361.

[117] Ibid, 4/362.

[118] Ibid.

[119] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/445.

fourth *takbeer*, the infantry leader of Banu Nahd, Qays ibn Ḥudhaym ibn Jarthoomah, stood up and said: "O' Banu Nahd, rush upon the enemy (*inhadu*). You are called Nahd so act upon your name." Khâlid ibn 'Urfuṭah sent word to him saying, "By Allah, control yourself, or I shall appoint someone else instead of you." Then he calmed down.[120]

Rustam orders some of his troops to attack

When Rustam saw that the Muslims were superior in single combat and in driving off their enemies, he did not wait until the plan of their leader for more single combat was completed. Rather he ordered some of his troops to launch a general attack on the division of the Muslim army that was composed of Banu Bajeelah and those who were with them. This attack was something strange, because the Persians directed nearly half of their army against a section that represented only a small part of the Muslim army. This indicates that they were desperate to put a stop to the single combat in which they had failed. Thus the Persians attacked one flank of the Muslim army with thirteen elephants, each of which was accompanied, according to the Persian military system, by four thousand warriors, including both foot soldiers and horsemen. The elephants scattered among the Muslim squadrons, but the attack focused on Bajeelah and those who were with them. The foot soldiers, who were known for their courage, stood firm against the Persian attack.

Sa'd commands Asad to go to the aid of Bajeelah

Sa'd saw what was happening to Bajeelah, so he sent word to Banu Asad, telling them: "Go to the aid of Bajeelah and the people who are with them." Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid, Ḥammâl ibn Mâlik, Ghâlib ibn 'Abdullâh and ar-Ribayyil ibn 'Amr set out, with their

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[120] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/363.

squadrons. Al-Ma'roor ibn Suwayd and Shaqeeq said: "By Allah, they charged at them, and kept stabbing and striking until we managed to get the elephants away from them. Then a powerful man of theirs came out and engaged Ṭulayḥah in single combat, but Ṭulayḥah soon killed him. When the Persians saw what the squadron of Asad was doing to their elephants, they launched a heavy attack against the Muslims. Dhu al-Ḥâjib and al-Jalinus, two of the Persian leaders, launched a coordinated attack on the Muslims, whilst the Muslims were still waiting for the fourth *takbeer* from Sa'd. The Persian forces gathered around Asad, along with those elephants, but Asad stood firm. Sa'd said the fourth *takbeer*, then the Muslims moved forward towards them, whilst the attack on Asad continued and the elephants moved against the Muslims' horses from the right and the left. The horses were terrified by the elephants, so the horsemen asked the foot soldiers to push their horses forward towards the elephants.

Sa'd tells Banu Tameem to tackle the elephants

Sa'd sent word to 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, saying: "O' Tameem, are you not keepers of camels and horses? Do you not have a way to deal with these elephants?" They said, "Yes, by Allah." Then he called some of his people who were archers, and others who were skilful and agile, and said to them, "O' archers, target the riders of the elephants with your arrows." And he said, "O' skilful and agile ones, go around the back of the elephants and cut the ropes so that the boxes which carry the fighters will fall. The fighting was focused on Asad, but there was fighting in the right and left flanks too. The companions of 'Âṣim went to the elephants and took hold of their tails and the ropes; they cut the ropes and the elephants started trumpeting. There was no elephant left that day but the boxes were thrown off and the fighters that were in them were killed. Fighting broke out everywhere, thus relieving the pressure on Asad and

pushing the Persians back from them. The fighting continued until sunset and into the early part of the night, then both sides fell back.

That day there were five hundred casualties among Asad, who had been in the front of the army. 'Âṣim and Banu Tameem had been shielding the people. That was the first day, which was known as the day of Armâth.[121]

The heroic attitude of Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid

The command of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ had an effect on Banu Asad. On that day, Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid said: "O' my tribe, our leader has great faith in you. If he knew that there was anyone who was more able to go to the aid of these people he would have sent them. Charge at the enemy, go at them like fierce lions. You are called Asad ("lion") so be as fierce as lions and never flee or turn back. Go forward and do not retreat. What a good job Rabee'ah is doing. Charge at them in the name of Allah."[122]

These words had an amazing effect on his people, motivating and energizing them. They were on their own in the battlefield until Banu Tameem came to their aid, and they sent forth that day five hundred martyrs.[123]

The tribes were impressed by the heroic courage of Banu Asad, and al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindi said: "O; Kindah, what a good job Banu Asad are doing." So Kindah moved from the defensive to the offensive, and drove back the Persians who were in front of them.[124]

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[121] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/365.

[122] Ibid, 4/364.

[123] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/449.

[124] *Al-Qâdisiyah* by Aḥmad 'Âdil Kamâl, p. 139; *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/364.

The field hospital

The field hospital was located in al-'Udhayb, where the womenfolk of the *Mujâhideen* were staying, waiting patiently and seeking reward with Allah. They received the wounded and treated them until the decree of Allah concerning them was fulfilled. In addition to that, they had another mission in which the children helped them, namely digging the graves of the martyrs. Treating and nursing the wounded is in tune with women's aptitudes, whereas digging graves is a tough job, but the men were busy fighting in jihad, so the women had to do their job out of necessity. They were qualified to do so because of their faith and patience.[125] The martyrs were moved to the valley of Musharrif, which is between al-'Udhayb and 'Ayn ash-Shams.[126] The cessation of fighting between the Muslims and their enemies that night gave some of the *Mujâhideen* the opportunity to visit their families in al-'Udhayb.[127]

Al-Khansa' bint 'Amr urged her sons to fight on the night before the battle

In the Muslim women's camp in al-'Udhayb, al-Khansa' bint 'Amr — the poetess of Banu Sulaym whose career straddled the *Jâhiliyah* and Islam — sat with her four grown sons, urging them to fight. She said: "You became Muslim willingly and migrated by choice. You know what Allah has promised of great reward to the Muslims who fight the *kâfirs*, and you know that the realm which abides is better than the realm which will pass away. Allah says,

﴾O' you who believe! Endure and be more patient [than your enemy], and guard your territory [by stationing army units permanently at the

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125 *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/451.

126 Ibid, 10/452.

127 Ibid.

places from where the enemy can attack you], and fear Allah, so that you may be successful.﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 200)*

If you wake up safe and sound tomorrow, *insha' Allâh,* then go and fight your enemy, seeking Allah's support against His enemies. When you see the fighting grow intense, then go forth. If you do that, you will gain booty and honour in the Hereafter."[128]

A woman of an-Nakh' encouraged her sons to fight

A woman from an-Nakh' had four sons who participated in the battle that day. When dawn started to break, she said to them: "You became Muslim and did not change, and you migrated but you did not migrate to Yathrib (Madeenah)... Then you brought your elderly mother and put her in front of the Persians. By Allah, you are the sons of one man, just as you are the sons of one woman. I did not betray your father and I did not cause any shame to your maternal uncles. Go and participate in the battle from start to finish." So they left her, hastening to join the battle. When they had left her, she raised her hands towards heaven and said: "O' Allah, protect my sons." After that they came back to her, having fought well, and not one of them was wounded."[129]

These are the attitudes of some of the elderly women on the first day of al-Qâdisiyah.

2.4.2. The day of Aghwâth

The day of Aghwâth was the second day of al-Qâdisiyah. On this day a division of the Syrian army, led by al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, arrived. The caliph 'Umar (ﷺ) had ordered the governor of Syria, Abu 'Ubaydah, to send the army of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed

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[128] *Al-Isti'âb,* no. 287; *Nisâ' al-Qâdisiyah,* Pp. 146, 147.

[129] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari,* 4/366.

back to Iraq to support the Muslims in al-Qâdisiyah. So he sent them, but he kept Khâlid with him because he needed him. He appointed Hâshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, the nephew of Sa'd, in charge of this army. When they had come from Iraq to Syria under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, they had been nine thousand strong. Now six thousand of them were returning to Iraq. Hâshim ibn 'Utbah appointed al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr over the vanguard, which was composed of one thousand warriors.[130]

The heroic exploits of al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr

Al-Qa'qâ' hastened, along with the vanguard, until they reached the army in al-Qâdisiyah on the day of Aghwâth. During his march, he had come up with an idea to boost the morale of the Muslims. He divided his army into one hundred sections, each of which was formed of ten men, and told them to come, one group after another; every time one group disappeared from view, they sent another ten after them. He went forth with the first ten, then they came in groups one after another. Every time al-Qa'qâ' looked towards the horizon and saw another group coming, he would say *takbeer* and the Muslims would join in and were encouraged to continue fighting their enemy. This strategy succeeded in raising the moral of the fighters, for the arrival of one thousand men is not regarded a large reinforcement for an army of thirty thousand, but this idea to which Allah guided al-Qa'qâ' made up for the small number of reinforcements and strengthened the resolve of the Muslims.

He gave them the good news of the arrival of more troops, and said: "O' people... do what I do." He went forward and called out: "Who will fight with me in single combat?" They said concerning him what Abu Bakr had said: "No army will be defeated among

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[130] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/367; *at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/367.

whom there is a man like this," and they felt happy with him. Dhu al-Ḥâjib[131] came out to meet him and al-Qa'qâ' asked him: "Who are you?"[132] He said, "I am Bahman Jâdhawayh." At this point al-Qa'qâ' remembered the calamity that had befallen the Muslims on the day of the bridge at the hands of this commander. He was seized with Islamic zeal and called out, "Vengeance for Abu 'Ubayd, Sulayṭ and the companions of the bridge!" Even though this Persian commander was renowned for his bravery, his courage must have failed him when he heard this cry. Abu Bakr had said of al-Qa'qâ': "The voice of al-Qa'qâ' in an army is better than a thousand men.[133] How could a man withstand it, no matter how brave and steadfast he was?" Hence al-Qa'qâ' soon slew him in front of his troops. His killing in this manner had a great effect of unnerving the Persians and raising the moral of the Muslims, because he was the commander of twenty thousand Persians. Then al-Qa'qâ' called out again, "Who will fight with me in single combat?" Two men came out to meet him, one of whom was al-Bayrazân and the other was al-Bandawân. Al-Qa'qâ' was joined by al-Ḥârith ibn Zabyân ibn al-Ḥârith, the brother of Banu Tameem al-Lât. Al-Qa'qâ' fought with al-Bayrazân and killed him.[134] Ibn Zabyân fought with al-Bandawân, who was one of the champions of the Persians and killed him. Thus at the beginning of the day, al-Qa'qâ' finished off two of the five Persian commanders. Undoubtedly that threw the Persians into confusion, which further contributed to the demoralization of the Persian troops. Two horsemen from each side met in combat, and al-Qa'qâ' started saying: "O' Muslims, use your swords and reap the harvest." The

[131] One of the Persian leaders and heroes; he is the one who defeated the Muslims on the day of the bridge. [Author]

[132] Al-Qa'qâ' asked Jâdhawayh this question because he did not recognize him; on the day of the bridge, al-Qa'qâ' had been in Syria. [Author]

[133] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/455.

[134] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/368.

people started passing on this advice to one another, and rushed at the enemy, and continued fighting until evening came. The narrators state that al-Qa'qâ' launched thirty charges; every time he saw another group coming, he launched another charge. And the last one who was killed was Burz Jamhar al-Hamadhâni.

'Alba' ibn Jaḥsh al-'Ujali: Disembowelled during the battle

A man from among the Persians appeared before the troops of Bakr ibn Wâ'il and called out, "Who will fight with me in single combat?" 'Alba' ibn Jaḥsh al-'Ujali went out to meet him. 'Alba' struck the Persian a blow in his chest that damaged his lungs, then the Persian struck him a blow in his belly and his intestines spilled out and fell to the ground. The Persian died at once; as for 'Alba', he was unable to stand. He tried to put his intestines back in place, but he could not. A Muslim man passed by him, and 'Alba' said to him, "Hey you, help me with my belly." So he helped him put his intestines back in, then 'Alba' held the two sides of the wound together and marched towards the Persian ranks, without looking back at the Muslims. Death caught up with him thirty cubits from where he first fell, and he died saying,

"I was one of those who did well in battle, and
I hope that this will bring me a reward from our Lord."

Al-A'raf ibn al-A'lam al-'Uqayli

A man from among the Persians came out saying, "Who will fight with me in single combat?" Al-A'raf ibn al-A'lam al-'Uqayli came out to meet him and killed him. Then another came out to fight him and he killed him. Then the horsemen surrounded him and threw him down. He dropped his weapon and they took it, so he threw dust in their faces until he got back to his companions.[135]

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[135] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/370.

The sacrifices made by the four sons of al-Khansa'

The four sons of al-Khansa' made the ultimate sacrifice on that day. They went out to fight with zeal, and each of them recited verse to encourage himself and brothers. They went out in turn and fought until they were martyred.[136] When the news of her four sons reached al-Khansa', she said: "Praise be to Allah Who has honoured me by their deaths; I hope that my Lord will re-unite me with them by His mercy."[137]

A trick by al-Qa'qâ' that had a far-reaching effect on the Persians

On this day, the day of Aghwâth, al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr and his cousins from Tameem played a trick that had a far-reaching effect on the Persians. When he saw what the elephants had done to the Muslims' horses on the first day, he and his people, by the help of Allah, prepared the camels and made them look frightening, so as to support the horses. They clothed them, adorned them and put masks on their faces, then they mounted the foot soldiers on them and surrounded them with the horses to protect them. Then they attacked the Persian horses with them, and did to them on the day of Aghwâth what they had done to the Muslims on the day of Armâth. There was no group, large or small, at whom they charged, but that group's horses got spooked and overwhelmed by the Muslims' horses. When the people saw that, they began to copy them, and the Persians suffered more because of the camels on the day of Aghwâth than the Muslims had suffered because of the elephants on the day of Armâth.[138]

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[136] *Al-Qâdisiyah*, p. 154, by Aḥmad 'Âdil Shâkir.

[137] *Al-Khansa' Umm ash-Shuhada'*, by 'Abdul-Mun'im al-Hâshimi, p. 98.

[138] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/46.

Thus we see that the first Muslims excelled over their enemies in military creativity. The Persians had exhausted the Muslims on the first day by using the elephants, and since the Muslims had no elephants, they invented a trick using the camels that they did have, to fool their enemies. This brilliant trick scared the enemy's horses and caused them to panic and flee, along with their Persian riders. This is how the Muslims should be — they should excel in the field of material preparation after excelling in the field of spiritual preparation.

Abu Miḥjan ath-Thaqafi in the heart of the battle

On the day of Aghwâth, the battle went on until midnight. That night was called *Laylat as-Sawâd*. Then the fighting stopped after both sides retreated. The cessation of fighting was of great benefit for the Muslims, as they were able to move their martyrs to their place of burial in the valley of Musharriq, and they moved their wounded to al-'Udhayb, where the women could take care of them. Abu Miḥjan ath-Thaqafi took part in the fighting for the first time on this night.[139] Abu Miḥjan had been detained and put in chains, and he was in the palace. In the evening he went up to Sa'd and asked him to forgive him and let him go. Sa'd rebuked him, so he went back down and went to Salma bint Khaṣafah, and said: "O' Salma, O' daughter of Âl Khaṣafah, do you want to do something good?" She said, "What is it?" He said, "Let me go and lend me al-Balqa' (a horse). By Allah, if Allah keeps me safe and sound I will come back to you and put my feet in these chains." She said, "Why would I do that?" So he went back with his feet still in the chains, expressing in verse his sorrow at not being able to join the army and fight alongside the Muslims, and promising Allah that he would never visit taverns again if he got the chance to join the army.

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139 Op. cit., 10/462.

Salma said: "I prayed *istikhârah* and I trust you." She let him go and said, "But as for the horse, I will not lend it to you." She went back to her house, but he still took the horse; he led it out of the gate of the castle that was closest to the ditch, then he mounted it and galloped off until he approached the right flank of the army. Then he said *takbeer* and charged at the left flank of the enemy, wielding his spear and his weapon among the ranks. Then he went to the back of the Muslim army and moved to the left flank, where he said *takbeer* and charged at the right flank of the enemy, wielding his spear and his weapon among the ranks. Then he went back behind the Muslim army and charged at the heart of the enemy army, wielding his spear and his weapon among the ranks. That night he fought the enemy in an amazing manner, and the people were impressed with him, but they did not know who he was, for they had not seen him at the beginning of the battle. Some of them said, he must be one of the companions of Hâshim, or Hâshim himself. As he was watching the people, lying on his stomach at the top of the fort, Sa'd said: "By Allah, were it not that Abu Miḥjan is detained, I would have said that this is Abu Miḥjan and this (horse) is al-Balqa'." Rumours flew as to who that man was. At midnight the Persians retreated and the Muslims did likewise. Abu Miḥjan went back to where he had come out from, and put his feet back in their chains. Salma said to him: "O' Abu Miḥjan, why did this man detain you?" He said, "By Allah, he did not detain me for something that I ate or drank, but I was a drinker at the time of *Jâhiliyah*, and I am a poet, I say whatever comes to my lips and sometimes that gets me into trouble. That is why he detained me. I said in one of my poems:

'If I die, bury me next to a grapevine so that its roots may irrigate my veins.
Do not bury me in the wilderness for I fear that I would never taste it again.' "

The next day, Salma told Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ about what had happened. He called him and let him go, saying, "Go, and I will not hold anything against you for what you say unless you do it." He said, "Rest assured that I will never do what my tongue says, if it says something objectionable."[140]

Al-Qa'qâ's plan in the latter part of the night of as-Sawâd

One of the most important incidents that took place in the latter half of the night of as-Sawâd was when al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr took the opportunity to make a plan to raise the morale of the Muslim troops on the following day. He ordered his followers to sneak out and then come back during the day, one group after another, each group composed of one hundred warriors. He said to them, "When the sun rises, come one hundred at a time; every time one group disappears from sight, send another hundred. If Hâshim comes, all well and good, otherwise this is a way to renew our people's hope and energy."

When the sun started to rise, al-Qa'qâ' was keeping a lookout. He saw horses in the distance, so he said *takbeer* and the people repeated his *takbeer* and said, the reinforcements have come. His brother 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr followed his example, and told his people to do the same thing. They came from another direction (Khaffân). No sooner had the last of al-Qa'qâ''s companions come, but Hâshim ibn 'Utbah also arrived with seven hundred men from the army of Syria.

When the last of the companions of al-Qa'qâ' came, Hâshim appeared with seventy men.[141] Here the reader may note the humbleness of Hâshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, who agreed to follow the best strategy: he split his army up into groups just as al-

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[140] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/374.
[141] Ibid, 4/375.

Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr had done. His ego and his position did not prevent him from following the opinion of one of the commanders who were under him. He was one of the men who had been shaped by the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ), those who had begun to cancel their egos and self-interests for the sake of the interests of Islam and the Muslims. This is one of the main reasons for their success in establishing the Islamic state and defeating the world powers of that era.[142]

2.4.3. The day of 'Imâs

This was the third day, the day of 'Imâs. The Persians came up with a new plan to avoid the problems that they had faced on the first day, when the belts of their elephants had been cut. They put foot soldiers with each elephant to protect it, and horsemen to protect the foot soldiers. The Muslims continued to fight the elephants and the men on top of them and around them, and they found the going tough indeed. When Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) saw what a hard time the Muslims were having, he sent word to some Persian Muslims who were with the Muslim army, asking them about the elephants and where their weak points were. They said that the weak points were the eyes and the trunk; the elephants could not function if these were struck. So Sa'd sent word to al-Qa'qâ' and 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr, telling them: "Take care of the white elephant for me." Al-Qa'qâ' was familiar with it and was close to it. He also sent word to Ḥammâl ibn Mâlik and Ribayyil ibn 'Amr al-Asadi, saying: "Take care of the mangy elephant for me." They were familiar with it and were close to it. Al-Qa'qâ' and 'Âṣim took their little spears and marched towards the elephant with a squadron of horsemen and foot soldiers, and they said to those who were with them, "Surround it and make it get

[142] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/466.

confused." The elephant started looking in confusion right and left at those who were around it. Al-Qa'qâ' and 'Âṣim got near it and attacked it whilst it was distracted by the people around it. They both drove their little spears into the eyes of the white elephant, which shook its head and threw its driver off. Then it lowered its trunk, and al-Qa'qâ' struck it with his sword and cut it off. The elephant fell on its side, killing those who were on top of it. Ḥammâl ibn Mâlik launched his attack and said to ar-Ribayyil ibn 'Amr: "You choose: either you strike its trunk while I stab its eye, or you stab its eye while I strike its trunk." He chose to strike its trunk, so Ḥammâl charged at it whilst it was distracted by those who were around it. Ḥammâl stabbed it in the eye, and the elephant fell on its back. Then it got up and ar-Ribayyil struck it and chopped off its trunk. The elephant driver saw him and struck him on the forehead and nose with an iron stick, but both ar-Ribayyil and Ḥammâl managed to get away. The elephants squealed like pigs at the loss of the two leading elephants and started running away, stampeding the Persian army, until they crossed the river of al-'Ateeq and fled towards al-Madâ'in, and everyone who had been riding them was killed.[143]

Once the battlefield was free of elephants, the people marched against one another and the fighting intensified. The Persians had a reserve army of elite fighters, and every time a gap appeared in their ranks, Yazdagird would send for some of them. That day ended with the Muslims and the enemy on an equal footing.[144]

The heroism of 'Amr ibn Ma'di Karib

'Amr ibn Ma'di Karib said: "I am going to attack the elephant and the people around it. Do not leave me for longer than the time it takes to slaughter a camel. If you come late, you will have lost Abu

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[143] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/468.

[144] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/376.

Thawr (meaning himself), and how could you find another man like Abu Thawr? If you come on time you will find me with my sword still in my hand." So he charged and did not look back until he started striking them and disappeared in a cloud of dust. His companions said, "What are you waiting for? You are going to lose him, and if you lose him, the Muslims will have lost their knight." So they charged and the *mushrikeen* separated around him after throwing him to the floor and stabbing him, but his sword was still in his hand and he was striking them. His horse had also been stabbed. When he saw his companions and realized that the Persians had backed away from him, he grabbed the leg of a Persian horse whose rider was trying to make it move; the horse stumbled and the Persian looked at 'Amr and wanted to kill him. The Muslims saw him and rushed to help him. The Persian dismounted and ran back to his companions and 'Amr said: "Give me the reins." They gave him the reins and he mounted the horse and rode off.[145]

Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi

The fighting continued on the third day until night came, then the voice of Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi, who had gone behind the Persian lines, made them stop fighting and break apart. That scared the Persians and amazed the Muslims, and they stopped fighting to see what was happening. Sa'd (ﷺ) had sent him with some other people to guard a place where the Muslims might be exposed to danger, and he went beyond the call of duty and came from behind the Persians, and shouted "*Allâhu Akbar* — Allah is All-Great" three times.[146] This tactic proved useful, as the fighting stopped and there was an opportunity to regroup and prepare for the night fighting.

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[145] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/378.
[146] Ibid, 4/382.

Qays ibn al-Makshooḥ

When he returned from Syria along with Hâshim ibn 'Utbah, he addressed the people saying: "O' Arabs, Allah has blessed you with Islam and has honoured you with Muhammad (ﷺ), and you have become brothers by Allah's grace. Your call is one and you are united, after you had been enemies of one another, fighting one another like lions and snatching one another like wolves. Support (the cause of) Allah and He will support you, and Allah will grant you victory over the Persians. Allah granted victory to your brothers in Syria and they seized the red palaces and the red fortresses."[147]

The night of al-Hareer

The fighting started on the night of *al-Hareer*, ahead of the fourth day. The Persians changed their tactics on this night. Rustam realized that his army had not achieved the same level of horsemanship in battle as the Muslims had, and they did not even come close. So he decided to make the whole army charge at once, so as to avoid the kind of setbacks he had previously encountered, which had destroyed the morale of his troops. None of the Persians came out for single combat after the brilliant performance of the Muslim champions. Rustam arranged his army in thirteen rows in the core and on both flanks. Al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr began to fight, accompanied by the elite forces, before Sa'd said *takbeer*, but he let them off and prayed for forgiveness for them. When he said *takbeer* three times, the commanders and all the army marched forward, in three ranks, the archers, the horsemen and the foot soldiers. The fighting that night was very intense, and they continued fighting from the first part of the night until morning, not speaking at all and communicating only in grunts (*al-hareer*), so that night was called the night of *al-Hareer*. The Muslims encouraged one another to strive

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[147] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/378.

their utmost in fighting, because they were expecting a tough fight. Among their words that have been narrated concerning that are the following[148]:

Durayd ibn Ka'b an-Nakha'i said to his people: "The Muslims are preparing for the fight, so be among the first of the Muslims to fight for Allah and in jihad tonight, for no one will be among the first tonight but his reward will be in accordance with how soon he joined the fight. Compete with them for martyrdom and be content with death, for this is the best way to avoid death if you want to live and if you do not, then the Hereafter is what you are seeking."

Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays said: "O' Arabs, these people (the Persians) should not be more daring in facing death and less concerned about worldly gains than you. Compete for wives and children and do not fear death, for this is the wish of the noble people and the means of martyrdom."[149]

Ḥumaydah ibn an-Nu'mân al-Bâriqi said: "On the night of *al-Hareer* there was a fully-armed Persian squadron near the tribe of Ju'fâ, so they marched upon them and fought them with the sword, but they saw that their swords were having no effect on the armour they were wearing, so they retreated. Ḥumaydah ibn an-Nu'mân al-Bâriqi said to them, 'What is the matter with you?' They said, 'Our weapons are not effective against them.' He said, 'Wait here until I show you.' So they watched, and Ḥumaydah attacked one of their men from behind, striking him with a spear. Then he turned to his companions and said, 'I think this is the way to kill them.' So they attacked them and pushed them back."[150]

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[148] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/472.

[149] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/384.

[150] Ibid, 4/386.

Near the tribe of Kindah there was Turk aṭ-Ṭabari, one of the Persian commanders. Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindi said: "O' people, march towards them." So he marched towards them with seven hundred men and pushed them back, and he killed their commander, Turk.

The fighting that night was intense and non-stop. The leaders of the tribes encouraged their tribes to be steadfast and patient. One indication of the intensity of the fighting on that night was the report narrated by aṭ-Ṭabari from Anas ibn al-Ḥulays, who said: "I was present on the night of *al-Hareer*, where the clash of iron was like the sound of the blacksmith all night, until morning came. They were given a great deal of patience. Sa'd spent a night such as he had never spent, and the Arabs and Persians saw something the like of which they had never seen. There was no more news from either Rustam or Sa'd, and Sa'd started to make *du'â'* until the night was half over.

Sa'd understood that as meaning that victory was nigh, so Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ spent the night praying to Allah and seeking His support. It is worth noting here that Sa'd was a man whose *du'â'* was answered.[151]

2.4.4. The day of al-Qâdisiyah

On the fourth day the Muslims were still fighting. Al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr went about among the people and said, "Victory will come soon to those who show patience, so be patient for a while and attack, for victory comes with patience, so prefer patience over panic." A number of leaders gathered around him and they charged at Rustam, until at dawn they reached the troops who were near him. When the tribes saw that, their leaders stood up to address them. Qays ibn

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[151] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 9/474.

'Abdi Yaghooth, al-Ash'ath ibn Qays, 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib, Ibn Dhi as-Sahmayn al-Khash'ami and Ibn Dhi al-Burdayn al-Hilâli stood up and said: "These people (the Persians) should not have more courage in facing death than you, or be more willing to forfeit this world than you." Some men of Rabee'ah stood up and said, "You are the most knowledgeable of people about the Persians and you were more courageous against them in the past. What is stopping you now from being more courageous than you were before?"[152]

Thus we see another aspect of the brilliance of al-Qâ'qâ' ibn 'Amr, whose brilliance was manifested in many ways. Allah blessed him with a combination of rare courage, wisdom and strong faith, and he used all of that to support Islam and the Muslims. His joining the battle was a great support to the Muslims. Al-Qa'qâ' realized that the enemy was running out of patience after the fighting had gone on for a day and a night non-stop, and before that for two days with only a short respite. By means of his insight and lengthy experience — after the guidance of Allah — he knew that the consequences of the battle would be in favour of those who showed patience after this lengthy and exhaustive struggle. Al-Qa'qâ' and the heroes who were with him managed to penetrate deeply into the core of the Persian army until they found themselves close to Rustam at noon. At this point the support of Allah came down and He supported His close friends (*awliya'*) with troops from Him; a violent wind, the *daboor* or west wind, blew and carried the cover away from the throne of Rustam, throwing it into the al-'Ateeq river. Then dust blew up in the faces of the Persians and hindered their defence.[153]

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[152] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/387.

[153] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/476.

The slaying of the Persian commander Rustam

Al-Qa'qâ' and those who were with him advanced until they found the throne of Rustam, which they did not see before because of the dust. Rustam had left the throne and sheltered behind a mule, which fell on top of him without him realizing it and damaged a disk in his back. Rustam fled towards the al-'Ateeq river to try and save himself, but Hilâl caught up with him. He grabbed his leg, then he dragged him and killed him, then he climbed on top of the throne and shouted, "I have killed Rustam, by the Lord of the Ka'bah! Come to me!" The core of the Persian army fled. The other Muslim commanders also advanced towards those who were opposite them, and the Persians retreated before them. When al-Jalinus realized that Rustam had been killed, he stood on the dam that had been made in the river and called the Persians to cross, fleeing from death, and they crossed. As for the Persian troops who were in chains, of whom there were thirty thousand, they rushed into the al-'Ateeq river and the Muslims stabbed them with their spears, and not one of them escaped.[154]

The end of the battle

The battle ended by the grace of Allah, then by the efforts of the Muslim heroes and the wisdom of their commander, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ. It was a fierce and tough battle in which the enemies resisted the Muslims for three days, until Allah defeated them on the fourth day, whereas the Muslims usually defeated their enemies in one day. One of the reasons for this resistance was the fact that the Persians regarded this battle as decisive: if they won, their state would abide, but if they lost their state would perish and would never recover after that. Another reason for their resistance was the presence of their greatest leader, Rustam, at the head of the army, who was a

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[154] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/388.

commander with a history of victories against his enemies, in addition to the Persians' superiority in numbers and equipment. The Persians numbered some one hundred and twenty thousand warriors, not counting their followers, as well as the reinforcements sent daily by Yazdagird, whereas the number of Muslims was thirty-odd thousand.[155] Despite all that, the Muslims defeated them after they sent on 8500 martyrs.[156] This number of martyrs is the largest number of any battle during the first Muslim conquests. The fact that the number was so high is indicative of the fierceness of the battle and of the Muslims' willingness to expose themselves to martyrdom. May Allah be pleased with them all.[157]

Pursuing the remnants of the defeated army

Sa'd (ﷺ) issued orders that the remnants of the defeated army be pursued. He sent al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr and Shuraḥbeel ibn as-Samṭ al-Kindi off right and left in pursuit of those who had not crossed the river, and he ordered Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah to pursue those who had crossed the river with their commanders. The Persians had made a hole in the dam so that the Muslims would not be able to follow them, but Zuhrah and three hundred horsemen managed to cross with their horses. He ordered those who did not manage to cross to come via the bridge, even though it was a little further, and catch up with them. Al-Jalinus, who was one of their top commanders, was travelling at the rear of the army in order to protect them. Zuhrah caught up with him and they fought; they exchanged two blows and Zuhrah killed him and took his possessions. They pursued the Persians and killed some of them, then in the evening they went back to al-Qâdisiyah with the Muslims.[158]

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155 *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/388.

156 Ibid.

157 *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/479.

158 *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/389.

Good news of the victory reaches 'Umar (ﷺ)

Sa'd wrote to the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ) telling him of the victory, sending the letter with Sa'd ibn 'Umaylah al-Fazâri. He said in his letter: "Allah has granted us victory over the Persians, and has given them the same punishment as those who came before them, after a lengthy fight and much distress. They fought the Muslims with numbers the like of which has never been seen before, but Allah did not benefit them thereby, rather He benefited the Muslims instead. The Muslims followed them along the rivers and riverbanks, and in the mountain passes. Among the Muslims, Sa'd ibn 'Ubayd al-Qâri' and So and so and So and so were killed, and other Muslim men whom we do not know, but Allah knows who they are. They used to recite the Qur'an with a sound like the buzzing of bees when night came, and they were the lions of mankind, although lions cannot compare to them. Those who passed away are not better than those who were left, except by virtue of martyrdom, because martyrdom was not decreed for them."[159]

We learn several things from this letter, such as the following:

Sa'd's attitude of *Tawheed*, and how he glorified Allah and declared that he himself had no power or strength; the victory over their enemies came from Allah alone, and did not come by the strength of the Muslims, despite the great efforts and sacrifices that they made and despite the huge strength and numbers of the enemy. The outcome of the battle was not up to the people, rather it was all under Allah's control. He is the One Who deprived the enemy of benefiting from their strength, and He is the One Who allowed the Muslims to benefit from their strength. Human beings are simply the means by which Allah grants benefit or harm. Allah is the Only One Who can ward off harm or bring benefits. Thus Sa'd (ﷺ)

[159] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/408.

understood the meaning of *Tawḥeed*, and he lived it with his troops day by day. In his letter, we see Sa'd describing the *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them) and the *Tâbi'een* who were with them, as excelling in worship and courage, for they were worshippers by night, reciting the Qur'an with a sound like bees humming, never becoming tired or exhausted, and by day they were knights whose courage and steadfastness could not be matched even by lions.[160]

'Umar (ﷺ) would stand outside Madeenah to see if anyone was coming from al-Qâdisiyah. He would wait from morning until mid-day, then he would go back to his family and his home. When the bringer of glad tidings came, he said, "Where have you come from?" He told him, and he said, "O' slave of Allah, tell me!" He said, "Allah has defeated the enemy." 'Umar ran beside him, asking him questions, and the man on the camel did not know who he was, until they entered Madeenah and the people started greeting him as *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. He said, "Why didn't you tell me that you were the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, may Allah have mercy on you?" 'Umar said, "Don't worry about it, O' my brother."[161]

From this report we learn a number of things, including the following:

❖ The great interest of 'Umar, which led him to go out into the desert every day in hope of finding riders coming from Iraq, so that he could ask them about news of the Muslims and their enemies. He could have delegated someone else to bring the news to him, but his deep interest and concern for the Muslims would not let him do that. This is the ultimate mercy and sense of responsibility.

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[160] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/481.

[161] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/408.

- 'Umar's deep humility. He kept running alongside the rider, asking him for news of the battle. That messenger did not want to tell him the details until he reached the caliph, and he did not realize that the caliph was the man who was speaking to him and running beside him, until he learned that from the people in Madeenah. This is a great character and attitude for which the Muslims are entitled to feel proud before the entire world, for it is indicative of the greatness of this religion which produced men like 'Umar who were so just, merciful, resolved and humble.[162]

2.5. Lessons and benefits

2.5.1. The date of the battle and its effect on the progress of the conquests

Historians differ concerning the date of this battle. Professor Aḥmad 'Âdil Kamâl has researched the matter well, and reached the conclusion that it took place in Sha'bân of 15 A.H.[163] I am inclined to favour this view.

There can be no doubt that al-Qâdisiyah comes at the top of the list of decisive battles in the history of the world, and that it shows how divine support comes to those who are true believers. As a result of this battle, the gates of Iraq, and thence all of Persia, were opened. After that, Muslim victories came one after another. It brought the end of the Sassanids in a political and military sense, and the end of Magianism in a religious sense. From here the religion of Islam spread throughout Persia and beyond. In al-Qâdisiyah the Muslims

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[162] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi,* 10/488.

[163] *Al-Qâdisiyah*, 266; *at-Târeekh al-Islâmi,* 10/488.

dealt a blow to the Persians from which they never recovered. Hence al-Qâdisiyah deserves to be at the top of the list of decisive battles in human history.[164]

2.5.2. 'Umar's speech after the victory of al-Qâdisiyah

When news of the victory reached 'Umar (ﷺ), he announced it to them, and said: "I am very keen not to leave any need without meeting it, so long as we are flexible with one another. If that is not possible then we should support one another until we are all equal and have enough to survive. I wish you knew what I have in my heart for you, but there is no way for you to know except by my actions. By Allah, I am not a king to enslave you; rather I am a slave of Allah who has been given a trust. If I keep away from the public wealth and I spend it on you and make sure that you all have enough food and water in your houses, then I would be blessed. If I kept it for myself, I would have a short-lived joy, but I would be doomed for a long time."[165]

2.5.3. Fulfilment of agreements among the Muslims, and justice with no compromise

Sa'd wrote another letter to 'Umar (ﷺ), asking him for instructions regarding the *ahl adh-dhimmah* of the Arabs of Iraq who had broken their treaty when the Muslims were weak. 'Umar stood up and addressed the people, saying: "Whoever acts on whims and desires and sin loses out and harms no one but himself; whoever follows the Sunnah and adheres to laws and follows the right path, seeking that which is with Allah for those who obey Him, is doing

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[164] *At-Ṭareeq ila al-Madâ'in*, Pp. 473, 474.

[165] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/409.

the right thing and is a winner. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴾And they will find all that they did, placed before them, and your Lord treats no one with injustice.﴿ *(Qur'an 18: 49)*

The Muslims have defeated their enemies and the original inhabitants have moved on, and there are some people (who did not move on and) who have come to the Muslims on the basis of their previous covenant. What do you think of those who claim that they were forced to join the enemy; and those who did not make such a claim and did not stay, but rather moved on; and those who stayed and did not make any claim or move on; and those who surrendered?"

They agreed to honour the commitment to those who stayed and did not cause any harm, and that those who made a claim and were believed and those who fulfilled the covenant should be treated appropriately, but if they were not believed, they should be told that there is no covenant and a new covenant should be drawn up. As for those who had left their land and joined the Persians, if they wished they could make a new covenant with the Muslims, and they would come under Muslim protection, or the Muslims could continue to keep them from their land and not give them any option but fighting. Those who stayed and surrendered could be given the choice between paying *jizyah* or leaving; and the same choice was offered to the peasants.[166]

We learn a number of lessons from this, including the following:

'Umar (ﷺ) applied the principle of *shoora*, whereby he used to consult the people of wisdom in all his important affairs, despite the fact that he was known for abundant knowledge and deep wisdom. This noble conduct was one of the reasons for his great success in ruling the ummah. In these words with which 'Umar

[166] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/410.

prefaced his consultation, he reminded the *Ṣaḥâbah* of the necessity of avoiding whims and desires and the importance of being sincere in one's intention towards Allah, and of adhering to the straight path as set out by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Whoever does that will be protected from making errors of judgement in ruling, will see things correctly and will win the reward of Allah.[167] 'Umar summed up this advice in a letter which he sent to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, in which he said: "In all things Allah has allowed concessions in certain situations, except in two things: justice and *dhikr.* As for *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), there is no concession under any circumstances and Allah accepts nothing but a great deal of it. As for justice, there is no concession in it, whether at times of hardship or of ease. Even if justice appears soft, it is stronger than injustice and is more able to eliminate falsehood than injustice. Whoever among the Arabs of Iraq was true to his covenant and did not help the enemy against you in any way, is entitled to protection and is obliged to pay the *jizyah.* As for those who claim that they were forced but did not come and join you or leave and go elsewhere, do not believe them unless you want to; if you do not want to, then cancel the deal with them and send them wherever is safe for them."[168]

From this response we learn a number of lessons, including the following:

"Justice in ruling is the main foundation for Islam to rule and prevail, and for security and prosperity to spread in the Muslim lands. This has to do with this world. As for the Hereafter, there is no escape for the wrongdoers and oppressors, because with regard to the rights of Allah, He may forgive His slave for any transgressions, but when it comes to the rights of other people, on the Day of Resurrection Allah

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167 *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi,* 10/485.
168 *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari,* 4/410.

will detain the wrongdoers and those who were wronged so that they may settle the scores among one another. With regard to remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*), it must dominate the life of the Muslim, in his heart and on his lips, in all that he does, so that his thoughts are sincerely for the sake of Allah alone, he speaks only words that are pleasing to Him, and he acts only for His sake, and his main aim is to establish the remembrance of Allah on earth in word, deed and belief. If he achieves that, Allah will protect him from the confusion caused by specious arguments and whims and desires. Sa'd and the Muslims who were with him followed the instructions of the caliph and offered to those who were around them who had left their land the option of coming back, in which case they would have protection in return for paying the *jizyah*. Here we see an example of compassion and softening people's hearts. This generous treatment had the effect of making the Muslims and Islam dear to those who had broken the covenant, and after that they gradually started to enter Islam and become sincere followers of the faith."[169]

2.5.4. 'Umar gave the *khums* of al-Qâdisiyah to the fighters, and rewarded those who had distinguished themselves in battle

'Umar (ﷺ) ordered that the *khums* of al-Qâdisiyah should be given to the fighters, and Sa'd carried out the caliph's command. This ijtihad of 'Umar was quite brilliant, as was his ijtihad deciding to leave the land of as-Sawâd[170] in the hands of its people. He thought that it was in accordance with the interests of the state to distribute the

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[169] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/487.

[170] *As-Sawâd* ("black land" - in contrast to the Arabian desert) refers to the fertile lowlands of Iraq west of the Tigris. [Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, p. 155, n. 2, quoting *Ya'qoot*, vol. 3, p. 174] - [Translator]

khums among the *Mujâhideen*, so as to encourage them, make things easier for them, and acknowledge their efforts.[171] 'Umar sent four swords and four horses to Sa'd, to be given as a reward to those who had done best in the war in Iraq. He gave out the swords, three to men of Banu Asad, namely Ḥammâl ibn Mâlik, ar-Ribayyil ibn 'Amr ibn Rabee'ah and Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid; and the fourth he gave to 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi. He gave one of the horses to al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, and the other three to al-Yarboo'iyeen, as a reward to them for the battle of Aghwâth.[172] These are some of the means which 'Umar used to motivate the *Mujâhideen* and the Muslims to achieve noble aims.

2.5.5. How 'Umar restored the dignity of Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah

Zuhrah returned from his pursuit of the remnants of the Persian army. After killing Jalinus, one of the Persian commanders, az-Zuhrah took his possessions and put on the armour that Jalinus had worn. The prisoners who were with Sa'd recognized it and said, "These are the possessions of Jalinus." Sa'd asked him: "Did anyone help you to kill him?" He said, "Yes." He then asked, "Who?" He said, "Allah." At that time Zuhrah was a young man who had been a leader during the *Jâhiliyah* and did well in Islam. Sa'd got angry at how quickly Zuhrah had put on the armour of Jalinus. He thought that was too much and took it away from him, saying, "Why didn't you wait for my permission?"[173] News of that reached 'Umar and he sent word to Sa'd saying, "How can you go to someone like Zuhrah,

[171] *Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb al-Khaleefah al-Mujtahid* by al-'Imrâni, p. 163.

[172] *Khilâfat aṣ-Ṣiddeeq wa al-Fârooq* by ath-Tha'âlabi, p. 253.

[173] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/391.

when he has done what he has done and there are still many battles ahead, and do something to break his spirit and discourage him? Give him back his loot and favour him over his companions by giving him five hundred more, for I have granted everyone who kills a man permission to take his possessions." So he gave it back to him and he sold it for seventy thousand.[174] Thus 'Umar restored az-Zuhrah's dignity.[175]

2.5.6. The martyrdom of the *mu'adh-dhin* and the Muslims' competing to give the *adhân*

During the battle of al-Qâdisiyah, something amazing took place which is indicative of the extent of the early Muslims' concern for religious matters and things that would bring them closer to Allah. The *mu'adh-dhin* of the Muslims was killed on that day, and when the time for prayer came, the Muslims competed for giving the *adhân*, to the extent that they almost fought with swords over it. Sa'd drew lots among them, and the man whose name was drawn gave the *adhân*.[176] The competition for this righteous deed is an indication of their strength of faith, for the *adhân* brings no worldly gain, status or fame. Rather the motivation for this competition was their remembering the great reward that Allah has prepared for the *mu'adh-dhins* on the Day of Resurrection. People who competed for the *adhân* would certainly compete for matters more serious than that. This is the secret of their success in jihad for the sake of Allah and in calling people to Islam.[177]

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[174] Op. cit.

[175] *Al-Qâdisiyah*, p. 204.

[176] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/390.

[177] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/480.

2.5.7. Islamic military tactics in battle

Al-Qâdisiyah was a brilliant example of Islamic military tactics. The Muslims excelled in devising tactical manoeuvres that suited the situation. We can see 'Umar's ability in general mobilization and compulsory conscription, and using all available resources. In this battle the caliph used all available resources, both general troops and an elite force of Muslims. He wrote to Sa'd, instructing him to choose men with horses and weapons who were experienced and courageous. In this battle, Sa'd gathered seventy-odd of those who had been present at Badr, three hundred and umpteen of those who had been Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) after the oath of allegiance at ar-Riḍwân, three hundred of those who had been present at the Conquest of Makkah and seven hundred of the sons of the *Ṣaḥâbah*. He did not leave any leader, wise man, prominent man, orator or poet but he sent him against them; he sent the best and most prominent of the people against the enemy. Thus he used all material and moral resources in this battle.

In the mobilization for this battle we see a new idea that was previously unknown to the Muslims: Sa'd did not wait in Ṣirâr until his army was complete before setting off for Iraq; rather he set out with four thousand men and reached the battle site in al-Qâdisiyah with seventeen thousand. This was an innovative way of mobilizing the army which was unknown to the Muslims before 'Umar. In his letters to both al-Muthanna and Sa'd, 'Umar told them where this decisive battle was to be fought, and that was at al-Qâdisiyah. 'Umar was the first Muslim leader to use maps in studying the land and environment of the battle, when he asked Sa'd to describe the land to him in a detailed letter, telling him where the Muslim camps were, so that it was as if he could see it, and to give him a clear picture of the Muslims' situation. Sa'd wrote him a letter in which he described in detail the geography of al-Qâdisiyah between the ditch and the al-

'Ateek river and what lay to the right and left, then he described the environment in the surrounding land, and told him that the local inhabitants were hostile towards the Muslims. Based on this, the caliph made his tactical and strategic decisions.[178] From the time they arrived in the enemy's land, the Muslims used the tactic of raiding enemy supplies and exhausting them in this manner. These raids met the army's need for supplies and in addition to that they also served another important purpose, which was sapping the energy of the enemy and the ability of the local people to withstand the burdens and suffering of war. The Muslims also used the tactic of ambushing in their skirmishes with the Persians before al-Qâdisiyah and in their efforts to exhaust the enemy and weaken their morale. Bakeer ibn 'Abdullâh al-Laythi, along with a group of Muslim horsemen, ambushed a caravan in a stand of date palms on the road to aṣ-Ṣaneen, in which the sister of Azâdmard the son of Azâdhbah, the ruler of al-Ḥeerah, was being taken as a bride to the ruler of aṣ-Ṣaneen. When the caravan reached the place of ambush, the Muslims attacked it. Bakeer broke the back of Sheerzâd the son of Azâdhbah, the brother of the bride, who was at the head of the cavalry that was riding ahead of the caravan. The horses fled, galloping away with their riders. The Muslims seized all the other loads, and captured the daughter of Azâdhbah, along with thirty womenfolk of the chieftains and one hundred followers, and the value of the goods they were carrying with them is unknown.[179]

In this battle the Muslims changed their tactics according to new developments on the battlefield. On the first day we see them trying to tackle the elephants, cutting their ropes after shooting them with arrows, until they fled from the battlefield. They were awaiting reinforcements from Syria, and they brought the reinforcements to

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[178] *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, Pp. 271, 272.
[179] Ibid, p. 273.

the battlefield in groups, one after another, to alarm the enemy with their apparent numbers. Then they tried a brilliant trick of dressing up their camels and putting masks on them to make them look like elephants. They sent them into the enemy ranks, where they terrified the horses and made them flee. On the third day, the Muslims again tackled the Persian elephants which were protected by horsemen and foot soldiers. They attacked the biggest elephant, stabbing it in the eyes and cutting off its trunk; the elephants fled, and the Persians and Muslims became on an equal footing in the battlefield after the Persians lost their elephants, which were like tanks. When the Muslims saw that the fight was going to be a lengthy one, they decided on a general attack. They set their ranks in order and marched as one. As soon as the enemy began to retreat and the core of the army became exposed, Rustam, the leader of the enemy army, became their target. When they finished off Rustam, the Persian army suffered a crushing defeat. Thus we see that the methods used by the Muslims in this battle were not restricted to traditional methods of fighting, rather they responded to every situation with what was best. They moved away from primitive methods such as single combat to tactical moves, such as disguising their camels, cutting the ropes of the elephants, stabbing them in the eye and cutting off their trunks, and using classical methods of fighting such as targeting the leader. This battle was distinguished by mobilization along tribal lines, the advantage of which was that there was competition among the tribes in fighting.[180] These are some of the Islamic military methods used by the *Mujâhideen* in al-Qâdisiyah.

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[180] *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, Pp. 274, 275.

2.6. The conquest of al-Madâ'in (Ctesiphon)

Sa'd stayed in al-Qâdisiyah for two months, awaiting instructions from 'Umar, until there came the command to conquer al-Madâ'in and to leave the women and children in al-'Ateeq with many soldiers around them. He told him that the soldiers who stayed behind should have a share of the booty too, because they were staying behind to guard the families of the Muslims. Sa'd did that and set out with the army towards the end of Shawwâl. The remnants of the defeated army, among whom were the remaining commanders who were determined to defend themselves, had gone to Bâbil. The cities and towns of Persia began to fall one after another. The Muslims conquered al-Burs, then Bâbil after crossing the Euphrates, then Koothâ, then Sâbâṭ, part of it by force and part of it by means of a peace deal.[181] The organized campaign of the Muslims continued until they reached al-Madâ'in. 'Umar told Sa'd to be kind to the peasants and to fulfil the covenants with them, and a huge number of peasants came under Muslim protection. The peasants were moved by the attitude, justice and equality of the Muslim army, which stemmed from their great religion, where their leader and the least one among the common folk were equal before the greater truth. There was no oppression, no corruption in the land, and they were no longer subject to tyranny or enslavement such as they used to suffer. They became slaves of Allah alone.

Sa'd headed towards al-Madâ'in, on 'Umar's orders. He sent the vanguard of the army on ahead, under the leadership of Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah, followed by 'Abdullâh ibn al-Mu'attam with a part of the army, and Sharḥabeel ibn as-Samaṭ with another part, then Hâshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, whom he had made his deputy

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[181] *Itmâm al-Wafa'*, p. 82.

instead of Khâlid ibn 'Urfuṭah.[182] Then Sa'd joined them with the rest of the army, and appointed Khâlid ibn 'Urfuṭah in command of the rear guard.

Zuhrah, at the head of the vanguard, headed towards al-Madâ'in, which was the capital of the Persian state. The city straddled the Tigris west and east. The part which lay to the west of the river was called Bahurseer and the part that lay to the east was called Asbaneer and Ctesiphon. Zuhrah arrived at Bahurseer and started to lay siege to the city. Then Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ took the Muslim army, accompanied by the commander of his forces, his nephew Hâshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, to the western part of al-Madâ'in, where the king of Persia, Yazdagird, was. The Muslims besieged the city for two months, with the Persians coming out sometimes to fight the Muslims, but unable to defeat them.

Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah was struck by an arrow, because he was wearing chain-mail that had a hole in it. They had said to him, "Why don't you get this hole fixed so that arrows cannot penetrate it?" He said, "Why?" They said, "We fear for you." He said, "I will be dear to Allah if an arrow misses all these soldiers and comes to me through this hole and strikes me firmly." And he was indeed dear to Allah as he had hoped, and he was the first of the Muslims to be struck by an arrow that day. It struck him firmly through that hole, and some of them said, "Pull it out from him." He said, "Let me be, for I will still be able to carry on if it is still in me, and I hope that I can still strike some of them." He marched towards the enemy and struck Shahrayâr, who was from Astakhar, and killed him.[183]

The Muslims continued the siege for two months, using twenty catapults that the Persians who were allied with them had

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[182] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/155.

[183] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/454.

made for them, with which they scared the Persians. This indicates that the *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them all) did not neglect any material means of victory if they were able to use it, and they fully understood the words of Allah,

﴾And make ready against them all you can of power﴿ *(Qur'an 8: 60)*,

— in addition to their excellence in terms of spiritual means of victory, the most important of which are relying on Allah, remembering Him (*dhikr*) and calling upon Him (*du'â'*).

2.6.1. Allah is with His close friends by His support and help

It was narrated that Anas ibn al-Ḥalees said: "Whilst we were besieging Bahurseer, a messenger looked out at us and said, 'The king says to you, is there any way to make a peace deal by which we will have what is on our side between the Tigris and our mountain, and you will have what is on your side between the Tigris and your mountain? Are you not satisfied, may you never be satisfied!' Abu Mufazzir al-Aswad ibn Quṭbah spoke up before anyone else, and Allah caused him to speak words that neither he nor we understood. The man went back and we saw them crossing the river to the east of al-Madâ'in. We asked, "O' Abu Mufazzir, what did you say to him?" He said, "By the One Who sent Muhammad with the truth, I do not know what it was but I feel content, and I hope that I was made to say something good." The people came asking him the same question, one after another, until Sa'd heard of that and came to us. He said, "O' Abu Mufazzir, what did you say? For by Allah they are running away," and he told him the same as he had told us. He called out to the Persians but no one came out of the city except one man who asked for safe passage, which we granted to him. He said, "There is no one left inside, what is stopping you?" So the men entered the city

and conquered it. We did not find anyone or anything inside the city, except a few prisoners whom we took captive. We asked them and that man why the people had fled, and they said: "The king sent word to you offering a peace treaty and you told him that there would never be any peace treaty between us and you, until we eat honey in Koothâ." The king said, "What is this? The angels are speaking on their lips and answering us on behalf of the Arabs. By Allah, what this man says indicates that we are going to be finished, so seek protection on the other side of the city."[184]

2.6.2. The verses which Sa'd recited when he reached Madhlam Sabâṭ

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) stopped in Madhlam Sabâṭ after Hâshim and those who were with him came to Bahurseer, which was the western part of al-Madâ'in. When Sa'd stopped in that place, he recited the words of Allah,

﴾And warn [O' Muhammad] mankind of the Day when the torment will come unto them; then the wrongdoers will say: 'Our Lord! Respite us for a little while, we will answer Your Call and follow the Messengers!' [It will be said]: 'Had you not sworn aforetime that you would not leave [the world for the Hereafter].'﴿ *(Qur'an 14: 44)*

He recited this verse because in that place there were troops of Chosroes called Boorân, who swore by Allah every day that the Persian kingdom would never perish so long as they lived.[185] Zuhrah ibn al-Ḥawiyah defeated them and scattered them before he was martyred.[186] When the Muslims entered Bahurseer, in the middle of

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[184] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/455.

[185] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/451; *at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/160.

[186] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/160.

the night, they saw the white palace which was the palace of Chosroes. Ḍirâr ibn al-Khaṭṭâb said: "*Allâhu Akbar*, the white (palace) of Chosroes! This is what Allah and His Messenger promised," and they continued to say *takbeer* until dawn came.[187]

2.6.3. Consultation between Sa'd and his troops about crossing the river

When Sa'd realized that Chosroes had crossed the river to the eastern part of al-Madâ'in, taking all the boats with him, he became confused. The enemy was in front of him, with nothing between them except the river, but there was no way of crossing it because there were no boats. He was afraid that his enemy would move on and it would become difficult to finish them off. Then some of the Persians came to Sa'd and showed him a ford where they could cross the river with some risk. Sa'd refused and hesitated, then the river burst its banks and its water turned black and started foaming because the water was running so fast. At that point Sa'd saw a good dream in which he saw the Muslim horses crossing the river, and he interpreted the dream as meaning that they would cross. He gathered the people and praised and glorified Allah, then he said: "Your enemies have protected themselves from you by means of this river and you cannot reach them, but they can reach you, if they wish, in their boats. There is nothing behind you to make you fear an attack from the rear, for the previous *Mujâhideen* have taken care of them for you. I think that you should hasten to launch jihad against your enemy, and I have decided to cross this river and go after them." They all said, "May Allah guide us and you; do it."[188]

We learn the following lessons from this report:

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[187] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/451.
[188] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/165.

We are reminded that Allah is with His believing close friends and supports and helps them. The good dreams that Sa'd (ﷺ) saw were from Allah, and they made him steadfast and encouraged him to go ahead with this matter, the consequences of which were unknown, and Allah would cause the consequences to be in the believers' favour. The river suddenly started to flow quickly in an unusual manner, and it would appear that this was in the Persians' interests, because it would prevent the Muslims from attempting to cross the river. But in fact it was in the Muslims' interests, because it gave the *kâfirs* a sense of security and they were unprepared for a sudden attack by the Muslims. They could not carry with them all that they wanted when they ran away. The *Ṣaḥâbah* were greatly cheered by this dream of a righteous man, and it was a factor that encouraged them to go ahead. They thought positively of Allah and considered good dreams as a means of support from Him. The Muslim leaders at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs were, for the most part, decisive men who made the most of every opportunity to motivate their troops with their enthusiasm and strength of faith. So Sa'd (ﷺ) ordered his army to cross over to the enemy with the weapons of sincerity and piety, content with his troops' level of faith. So he went ahead, relying upon the help of Allah, then upon the high level of faith among his men. The *Ṣaḥâbah* and the *Tâbi'een* who were with them were characterized by their complete obedience to their leaders. They regarded this obedience as a *shar'i* obligation and a righteous deed through which they drew closer to Allah.[189]

2.6.4. Crossing the river and the conquest of al-Madâ'in

Sa'd told the people to cross the river, saying, "Who can protect the east side of the river, so that the people may cross safely?"

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[189] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/167.

He delegated 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, who was a strong and tough man, to protect it, and he sent with him six hundred elite troops, putting 'Âṣim in charge of them. He marched with them until they reached the bank of the Tigris, then he said: "Who will come with me to defend the river bank from your enemy, and we will protect you until you have crossed?" Sixty strong men joined him and they crossed the Tigris, and the rest of the six hundred followed them. Thus from the Muslim army was formed an elite group numbering six hundred who were known as the Ahwâl squadron. From them 'Âṣim selected sixty men under his own leadership to form the vanguard of this group. This was wise planning, first on the part of Sa'd, then 'Âṣim, because facing difficulties and taking risks cannot be done by a large number, rather it should be done by the strongest and toughest who have the best fighting skills, even if they are few. If others who were less qualified and less courageous joined this group then retreated when the enemy attacked, this would cause the defeat of the entire group.[190]

'Âṣim crossed the river with sixty men on horseback. It is reported that the scouts who went on ahead to the other side were: Asamm Bani Wallâd at-Teemi, al-Kalaj aḍ-Ḍabbi, Abu Mufazzir al-Aswad ibn Quṭbah, Sharaḥbeel ibn as-Samṭ al-Kindi, Ḥajl al-'Ajli, Mâlik ibn Ka'b al-Hamadâni and a young man from Banu al-Ḥârith ibn Ka'b. When the Persians saw them, they prepared horsemen to fight them, and they met near the eastern bank of the river. 'Âṣim said, "Spears, spears!" and directed them to aim them at their eyes. They met in battle and the Muslims aimed at their eyes. The Persians fled towards the riverbank with the Muslims stabbing at their horses with their spears to make them run away faster. They started galloping away and their riders could not control them. The Muslims

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[190] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi,* 11/168.

pursued them and killed most of them; those who got away fled one-eyed. Then the rest of the six hundred caught up with their brothers and they took control of the eastern bank of the river.[191]

2.6.5. The Muslims cross the river

When Sa'd saw that 'Âṣim had gained control of the riverbank, he gave the people permission to cross the river. He said: "Say, 'We seek the help of Allah and we put out trust in Him. Allah is Sufficient for us and He is the best Disposer of affairs. There is no power and no strength except with Allah, the Most High, the Almighty'." Most of the army crossed over on horseback, with the horses wading deep in the foaming and black water of the Tigris and the people chatting as they used to chat whilst travelling on land.[192] The one who was travelling alongside Sa'd in the water was Salmân al-Fârisi, and the horses started swimming with them on their backs, and Sa'd was saying: "Allah is Sufficient for us and He is the best Disposer of affairs. Allah will most certainly grant victory to His friends and will support His religion. Allah will defeat His enemies so long as there is no transgression or sin among the army that outweighs their good deeds."[193] Salmân said to him: "Islam is new and by Allah the rivers and seas have been subjugated to them as the land is subjugated. By the One in Whose hand is the soul of Salmân, people will leave (Islam) in crowds just as they entered it in crowds."[194]

What Salmân (ﷺ) meant by saying, "Islam is new" is that it was still alive and its followers were strong in faith and proud of it.

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[191] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/456, 457.

[192] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/169.

[193] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/459.

[194] Ibid.

Islam was the focal point of their lives for which they lived and died; they called people to it and they defended it. But later on there would come generations who would inherit this religion and would not be Muslims by choice, and it would not be the focal point of their concerns and feelings, rather all their concern would be focused on worldly achievements and enjoying the pleasures of this world; Islam would become a secondary concern in their lives. At that point they would go out of Islam in crowds just as they had entered it in crowds.[195]

The Muslims all crossed the river safe and sound, with no harm coming to anyone. No one fell in the river except a man from the tribe of Bâriq who was called Gharqadah, who fell from the back of a palomino horse. Al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr turned his horse around to go and help him, and he held on to his arm until he brought him across the river. The Bâriqi, who was one of the toughest of men, said: "Sisters are no longer able to give birth to sons like you, O' Qa'qâ'!" He was a maternal uncle of al-Qa'qâ'.[196]

The Persians were amazed when the Muslims crossed the river, and Yazdagird fled, heading for Ḥulwân. The Muslims entered the city unopposed, and Sa'd stayed in the white palace, which he took as a place of prayer and recited the verses:

﴾How many of gardens and springs that they [Fir'awn's (Pharaoh's) people] left behind, and green crops [fields] and goodly places, and comforts of life wherein they used to take delight! Thus [it was]! And We made other people inherit them.﴿ *(Qur'an 44: 25-28)*

And he prayed eight *rak'ahs*, the prayer of victory.

The first ones to enter al-Madâ'in were the Ahwâl squadron, then the

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[195] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/170.

[196] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/459.

al-Kharsa' squadron.[197] The Ahwâl squadron was led by 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, and the al-Kharsa' squadron was led by al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr.[198]

2.6.6. Examples of the Muslims' honesty

"I praise Allah and I am content with His reward"

When the Muslims arrived in al-Madâ'in and gathered their plunder, a man came with something which he gave to the one who was in charge of the plunder. He and the one who was with him said: "We have never seen anything like this, we have never gotten anything like this or anything that even comes close." They asked, "Did you take anything from it?" He said, "By Allah, were it not for Allah, we would not have brought it to you." They realized that this man was of good caliber and said, "Who are you?" He said, "No, by Allah, I will not tell you lest you or anyone else praise me. But I praise Allah and am content with His reward." A man followed him until he went back to his companions, then he asked about him and found out that he was 'Âmir ibn 'Abd Qays.[199]

'Aṣmah ibn al-Ḥârith aḍ-Ḍabbi said: "I went out with those who went out seeking booty, and I followed a well-travelled path where I saw a man on a donkey. He ran away and caught up with another one who was in front of him. They turned and ran with their donkeys until they came to a river where the bridge was broken. They stayed there until I caught up with them, then they parted. One of them threw something at me so I chased him and killed him, and the other one ran away. I went back to the two donkeys and brought them to the one who was collecting the plunder. He looked at what the first

[197] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/67.

[198] *Itmâm al-Wafa'*, p. 85.

[199] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/468.

one was carrying and there were two saddlebags. In one was a horse made of gold with a saddle of gold and a bridle of rubies and emeralds set in silver, and reins of similar fashion. And there was a knight made of silver, studded with jewels. In the other bag there was a camel of silver on which was a saddle of gold and reins of gold. All of that was adorned with rubies, and on it was a man made of gold studded with gems. Chosroes used to keep them in the columns in his palace on which their history was engraved.[200]

The goodness of al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Âṣim

Al-Qa'qâ' caught up with a Persian and killed him. He had with him two boxes and two bags. In one of the two boxes there were five swords and in the other there were six. These were the swords of the Persians and the kings with whom the Persians had fought wars. Among them were the sword of Chosroes and the sword of Heraclius. In the two bags were some shields that had belonged to kings, including the shield of Chosroes and the shield of Heraclius. He brought them to Sa'd, who said: "Choose one of these swords," so he chose the sword of Heraclius, and he gave him the shield of Bahrâm. The rest of them he gave to the al-Kharsa' squadron which was led by al-Qa'qâ', except for the swords of Chosroes and an-Nu'mân, which he decided to send to 'Umar so that the Arabs would hear about that, because they knew of these two men.[201]

The Ṣaḥâbah's praise for the members of the army

The senior *Ṣaḥâbah* praised that army, as when Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ said: "By Allah, this army is honest. Were it not that the virtue of the people of Badr is already established, I would have said that they were better than the people of Badr."[202]

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[200] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/468.

[201] Ibid, 4/467.

[202] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/181; *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/468.

Jâbir ibn 'Abdullâh said: "By Allah, besides Whom there is no other god, we have not seen anyone among the people of al-Qâdisiyah who prefers this world over the Hereafter. We were suspicious about three men, then we realized that we were wrong when we saw that their honesty and asceticism were unmatchable." They were: Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid, 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib and Qays ibn al-Makshooḥ.

Greater than that was the praise of the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ) himself, when he saw the *khums* from that booty, among which were the sword, belt and adornments of Chosroes. He said: "The people who sent this are indeed honest." 'Ali (ﷺ) said: "You were honest so the people were honest; had you been dishonest, they would have been dishonest."[203]

'Umar's attitude towards this amazing booty

Following the battle of al-Qâdisiyah, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqaṣ sent the cloak, sword, belt, bracelets, pants, shirt, crown and slippers of Chosroes to 'Umar; these were made of fine and expensive materials such as silk, gold and jewels. 'Umar looked at the people, and the tallest and most well-built of them was Surâqah ibn Mâlik ibn Jath'am. He said: "O' Surâqah, stand up and put this on." Surâqah said, "I was hoping to keep it, so I got up and put it on." 'Umar said, "Walk over there," so he walked away. Then he said, "Come back," so he came back. Then he said, "Good, good. A Bedouin from Madlaj wearing the cloak, pants, sword, belt, crown and slippers of Chosroes. What a day, O' Surâqah, when you are wearing the clothes of Chosroes and his family. What a great honour for you and your people. Take them off." So he took them off, and 'Umar said: "O' Allah, You withheld this from Your Messenger and Prophet, who was dearer to You than me and more honoured by You than me, and You

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[203] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/468.

withheld it from Abu Bakr, who was dearer to You than me and more honoured by You than me, and You have given it to me. I seek refuge in You lest You have given it to me in order to test me." Then he wept until those who were with him felt sorry for him. Then he said to 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf, "I urge you to sell it and divide it before evening comes."[204]

2.7. The battle of Jaloola'

The Persians gathered at a crossroads where routes to different cities met, in Jaloola'. They started complaining to one another and said: "If you separate you will never be united. This is the place from which we are going to depart. Let us unite against the Arabs and fight them. If we win, then this is what we want; if the outcome is otherwise, then we will have done our best." So they united under the leadership of Mahrân ar-Râzi. They dug a ditch around their city and surrounded it with wooden spikes, except for the routes that they used to use.

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ wrote to 'Umar informing him of that, and 'Umar wrote back ordering Sa'd to send Hâshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Waqqâṣ to Jaloola' with twelve thousand men, putting al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi in charge of the vanguard, Mas'ar ibn Mâlik in charge of the right flank, 'Amr ibn Mâlik ibn 'Utbah in charge of the left flank, and 'Umar ibn Murrah al-Juhani in charge of the rearguard. Hâshim went to them with his army and besieged them. The Persians held out for a long time, only coming out to them when they wanted to, and they engaged the Muslims in eighty skirmishes. But Allah gave the Muslims the upper hand and they defeated the *mushrikeen*, driving them onto the wooden spikes that they had set up to prevent

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[204] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/472; *al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/68.

the Muslims from advancing. Then the enemy prepared spikes of iron. Sa'd started sending horsemen as reinforcements. When the situation had gone on too long and the Persians were suffering because of the Muslims' patience, they decided to attack, so they came out to fight. Sa'd said: "Strive your utmost for the sake of Allah, so that you might attain the fullest reward and booty. Strive for the sake of Allah." They met and fought, and Allah sent against them a wind that made everything turn dark, so they had no choice but to stop fighting and retreat. Their horses started falling in the ditch, and they had no choice but to fill in the part of the ditch that was nearest to them so that the horses could climb out. Thus they spoiled their own fortifications.[205]

When the Muslims heard that the enemy had filled in part of the ditch, they said, "Let us charge at them again so that we may enter upon them or else die trying." When the Muslims attacked again, they lay iron spikes down around the ditch so that the horses would not advance towards them, and they left a space where they could come out and attack the Muslims. They fought fiercely, a battle the like of which they had not fought except on the night of al-Hareer, during the campaign of al-Qâdisiyah, but it was a shorter and quicker battle. Al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr ended up at the gate near the place where the ditch had been filled in, so he seized the gate and ordered someone to cry out, "O' Muslims, your commander has entered the ditch of the people and seized it. Come to him and do not let those who are between you and him prevent you from entering it." He issued this command in order to strengthen the Muslims. So the Muslims attacked, and they were in no doubt that Hâshim was there. No one could stop them until they reached the gate by the ditch, where they found that al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr had seized it, and the *mushrikeen* had started to flee right and left from the gate where their

[205] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/475.

ditch was. They died in a tactic prepared by the Muslims, losing their horses to the iron spikes that they had prepared for the Muslims, and ending up as foot soldiers. The Muslims pursued them, not sparing any but the most insignificant of them. On that day Allah killed one hundred thousand of them, and the ground was strewn with the bodies of the slain.[206]

2.7.1. "Our army made us talk because of their deeds"

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ sent Ziyâd ibn Ubayh with the financial account to 'Umar. Ziyâd was the one who kept records of the troops. When he came to 'Umar he spoke to him about what he had brought and described it to him. 'Umar said: "Can you stand up and tell the people what you have told me?" So he stood up and told the people of the victories they had won and what they had done, and how they had penetrated deeply into the enemy's land. 'Umar said, "This is an eloquent speaker." Ziyâd said, "Our army made us talk because of their deeds."

2.7.2. 'Umar's attitude concerning the booty of Jaloola'

The battle of Jaloola' ended in victory for the Muslims, and they collected a huge amount of booty. They send the *khums* to the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ), who said when he saw it: "By Allah, this should not be kept under any roof until I divide it." 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf and 'Abdullâh ibn Arqam spent the night guarding it in the courtyard of the mosque. The following morning, 'Umar came with the people and took the covers off the booty. When he saw the rubies, emeralds and jewels he wept. 'Abdur-Raḥmân said to him, "Why are

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[206] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/475.

you weeping, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*? By Allah, this is a time for giving thanks." 'Umar said, "By Allah, that is not why I am weeping, but Allah never gives this to a people but they start to envy one another and hate one another, and if they start to envy one another that will cause enmity and division among them."[207]

This is a kind of intuition that is based on faith, for the believer who has deep faith sees the consequences of what is happening in such a way that never even crosses the mind of anyone else. His fear for the believers lest they be affected by worldly matters in such a way that they become alienated from one another has a great impact on him and makes his tears flow in front of people. It is amazing that tears would flow from a man who had achieved such power that all people feared him, Muslims, *kâfirs* and hypocrites alike, but this is the compassion with which Allah (ﷻ) has adorned the hearts of the believers, so that they become as Allah has described them:

﴾Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate [in prayer], seeking Bounty from Allah and [His] Good Pleasure. The mark of them [i.e. of their Faith] is on their faces [foreheads] from the traces of prostration [during prayers]. This is their description in the *Tawrât* [Torah]. But their description in the *Injeel* [Gospel] is like a [sown] seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong, and becomes thick and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers, that He may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allah has promised those among them who believe [i.e. all those who follow Islamic Monotheism, the religion of Prophet Muhammad till the Day of Resurrection] and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward [i.e. Paradise].﴿ *(Qur'an 48: 29)*

[207] Op. cit., 4/480.

2.8. The conquest of Ramhormuz

The Persians had started to regroup yet again at the incitement of their king Yazdagird. They gathered in Ramhormuz under the leadership of al-Hormuzân. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ informed the caliph of their gathering, and he ordered him to prepare an army from the people of Koofa under the leadership of an-Nu'mân ibn al-Muqarrin. He also ordered Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari to prepare an army from Baṣra under the leadership of Sahl ibn 'Adiyy. When the two armies met, Abu Sabrah ibn Abi Ruhm was to assume leadership of both, and everyone who came to him would be counted as reinforcements for him.

An-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin set out with the people from Koofah, and headed to meet al-Hormuzân, who was in Ramhormuz. When al-Hormuzân heard that an-Nu'mân was headed his way, he wanted to attack, hoping to isolate an-Nu'mân with the support of the Persians who had started to join him. An-Nu'mân and al-Hormuzân met in Arbak, where they fought intensely. Allah caused an-Nu'mân to defeat al-Hormuzân, who evacuated Ramhormuz and fled to Tastar.

Meanwhile, Sahl ibn 'Adiyy came with the people from Baṣra, heading for Ramhormuz. News of the battle reached them in Sooq al-Ahwâz, and they heard that al-Hormuzân had run away to Tastar, so they headed for Tastar as did an-Nu'mân with the troops from Koofah.[208]

2.9. The conquest of Tastar

The army of an-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin and the army of Sahl ibn 'Adiyy reached Tastar, where they united under the leadership of

[208] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/61, 62.

Abu Sabrah ibn Abi Ruhm. Abu Sabrah asked 'Umar for reinforcements, and he sent Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari who become the leader of the army from Baṣrah, and Abu Sabrah carried on as commander of the entire army. The Muslims besieged Tastar for several months, during which they faced the enemy in eighty battles. The heroism of the champions became apparent in single combat, and several of them became famous for killing one hundred in single combats, apart from those whom they killed during the battles themselves. Among them were: al-Barâ' ibn Mâlik, Majza'ah ibn Thawr, Ka'b ibn Soor, and Abu Tameemah from among the people of Baṣra. Among the people from Koofah were: Ḥabeeb ibn Qurrah, Rab'â ibn 'Âmir, and 'Âmir ibn 'Abdullâh al-Aswad.[209]

During the final battle, the Muslims met their enemies and the fighting grew intense. The Muslims called out to al-Barâ' ibn Mâlik, saying, "O' Barâ', urge your Lord to defeat them for us." He said, "O' Allah, defeat them for us, and make me a martyr." Then the Muslims continued fighting and defeated their enemy, forcing them to cross their own trenches and pursuing them. When the going got too tough for the Persians and they could no longer bear the siege, two of them made contact with the Muslims independently of one another and told them that the way to conquer the city was through the place where water came out. This news reached an-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin and he urged his companions to do something. The heroes of the armies of Koofah and Baṣra met in that place at night, and entered the city thereby. Then they said *takbeer* and those who were on the outside also said *takbeer*. They opened the gates and destroyed the troops who had been guarding them after a little resistance.[210] During this battle, al-Barâ' ibn Mâlik and Majza'ah ibn Thawr were martyred when they were shot by al-Hormuzân. Their martyrdom

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[209] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/202.

[210] Ibid, 11/204.

came after the Muslims had won the battle and al-Hormuzân, the Persian commander, had fled to the citadel. The Muslims who had entered via the water-way encircled the citadel, and when they saw him they rushed towards him, but he said to them, "What do you want? You may think that I am cornered, but I have in my quiver one hundred arrows, and by Allah you will never be able to reach me so long as I have one arrow left, and not one arrow will miss its target. What is the point of taking me captive if I give you one hundred casualties, dead or wounded?" They asked, "What do you want?" He said, "I want to put my hand in yours and go to 'Umar, and he can do whatever he wants with me." They said, "We grant you that." So he threw down his quiver and let them take control of him. They put him in chains and kept an eye on him, and sent him to the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ). Then they took everything that was in the city of wealth and stored goods, of which they shared out four-fifths, giving each horseman three thousand *dirhams* and each foot soldier one thousand.[211]

We learn the following from the campaign of Tastar:

"I would not like to have instead of that prayer the whole world and everything in it"

Anas ibn Mâlik, the brother of al-Barâ', said: "I was there during the siege of Tastar when dawn broke and the fighting intensified, and they could not pray. We did not pray until after the sun had risen, then we prayed. We were with Abu Moosa and Allah (ﷻ) granted us victory. Anas ibn Mâlik al-Anṣâri said, 'I would not like to have instead of that prayer the whole world and everything in it.' "[212]

Among the great praise that was received by al-Barâ' ibn Mâlik was

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[211] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/63, 64.

[212] *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Asr ar-Râshidi*, p. 223.

when the Prophet (ﷺ) said, «"How many people there are who are unkempt and dusty, wearing scruffy clothes and no one would pay any attention to them, but if they were to adjure Allah to do something He would fulfil it. One such is al-Barâ' ibn Mâlik."»[213]

Al-Barâ' was a person whose *du'âs* were answered, and the people knew that because of this hadith, so during this battle they asked him to pray to Allah to defeat the enemy. Despite this great praise from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), al-Barâ' did not become proud or arrogant, rather he remained the humble man who would take great risks in battle that brought great results, without any interest in becoming a leader. When he asked Allah to grant victory to the Muslims, which would bring a great honour for them and for Islam, he did not forget about himself, and he asked Allah for the most precious thing that a believer whose faith is strong can ask for, namely martyrdom. Allah answered his prayer, defeating the enemies and granting him martyrdom on that day.[214]

2.9.1. The caliph 'Umar and al-Hormuzân

Abu Sabrah ibn Abi Ruhm, the Muslim commander in that battle, sent a delegation to 'Umar (رضي الله عنه), and sent al-Hormuzân with them. When they entered Madeenah, they dressed al-Hormuzân in his usual clothes of brocade woven with gold, and they put on his head his crown studded with rubies, and put on his other adornments, so that 'Umar and the Muslims could see him as he usually appeared. Then they took him out to the people, looking for 'Umar in his house, but they did not find him. They asked after him and were told that he had gone to the mosque to meet a delegation coming from Koofah. They went looking for him in the mosque, and did not see him. When

[213] *Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Kitâb al-Manâqib*, 5/650, hadith no. 3854.

[214] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/204.

they came out, they passed by some children of Madeenah who were playing. They said, "What are you looking for? Are you looking for the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*? He is sleeping on the right hand side of the mosque, using his burnous for a pillow." 'Umar had gone to meet the delegation from Koofah, wearing a burnous. When he had finished speaking to them and they had left him alone, he took off his burnous, rolled it up to make a pillow, and went to sleep. They set off, with a crowd of onlookers, and when they saw him they sat down near him. There was no one else in the mosque, asleep or awake, apart from him, and he had his stick in his hand. Al-Hormuzân asked, "Where is 'Umar?" They said, "That's him."

The delegation gestured to the people to be quiet, and al-Hormuzân listened to the people who were with him and asked, "Where are his guards and gatekeepers?" They said, "He does not have any guards or gatekeepers, or any scribe." He said, "He should be a prophet." They said, "He does the deeds of the Prophets."

'Umar woke up because of the noise made by the people, and sat up straight. Then he looked at al-Hormuzân and asked, "Is this al-Hormuzân?" They said, "Yes." He examined him and what he was wearing and said, "I seek refuge with Allah from the Fire, and I seek the help of Allah." And he said, "Praise be to Allah Who has humiliated this one and his supporters by Islam. O' Muslims, adhere to this religion, and follow the guidance of your Prophet (ﷺ), and do not be deceived by this world, for it is all deceit." The delegation said, "This is the ruler of al-Ahwâz, speak to him." He said, "No, not until there is nothing left on him of this adornment." So everything was taken off him except something that was left to cover him, and they put a scruffy garment on him. Then 'Umar said, "Well, O' Hormuzân, how did you see the consequences of treachery and the punishment of Allah?" He said, "O' 'Umar, during the *Jâhiliyah* Allah was not part of the dispute between us and you. We defeated

you because He was not with us or with you. Now that He is with you, you have defeated us." 'Umar said, "You defeated us during the *Jâhiliyah* because you were united and we were divided." Then 'Umar asked, "What is your excuse for breaking the truce time after time?" He said, "I am afraid that you will kill me before I tell you." He said, "Do not be afraid of that." He asked for water and it was brought to him in a coarse vessel. He said, "Even if I die of thirst, I cannot drink from such a vessel." Then it was brought to him in a vessel that pleased him. His hand started shaking and he said, "I am afraid that you will kill me whilst I am drinking this water." 'Umar said, "Nothing will happen to you until you have drunk it." He spilled it and 'Umar said, "Give him some more; do not let him be killed and be thirsty at the same time." He said, "I do not need any water. I just wanted to ensure my safety." 'Umar said to him, "I will kill you." He said, "You granted me safety." He said, "You are lying." Anas said, "He is telling the truth, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you did grant him safety." He said, "Woe to you, O' Anas, would I grant safety to the killer of Majza'ah and al-Barâ'? By Allah, you will find me a way out or I will punish you!" He said, "You said to him, 'Nothing will happen to you until you tell me,' and you said, 'Nothing will happen to you until you drink it.' " Those who were around him said something similar. 'Umar turned to al-Hormuzân and said, "You deceived me, and by Allah I would not accept to be deceived except by a Muslim." Then he became Muslim, and 'Umar allocated to him a stipend of two thousand, and let him stay in Madeenah.[215]

2.10. The conquest of Jundaisaboor

When Abu Sabrah ibn Abi Ruhm had finished conquering the land of al-Soos, he went out with his troops to Jundaisaboor, which

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[215] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/66.

was being besieged by Zurr ibn 'Abdullâh ibn Kulayb. They stayed there, fighting and clashing with the enemy, until one of the Muslims offered them security. The conquest of this city and that of Nahawand were two months apart. The Muslims were surprised when its gates were opened and the people came out with sheep for grazing and goods for trading, and the people came out of the citadel. The Muslims sent word to them, asking what was going on. They said, "You have granted security to us, and we have accepted. We will pay the *jizyah* to you in return for your protection." They said, "We did not do that." They said, "We are not lying." The Muslims made enquiries amongst themselves, and it turned out that a slave called Maknaf, who was originally from that city, was the one who had written to them. They said, "He is just a slave." They said, "We do not know who among you is free and who is a slave. We received this offer of security and we are bound by it, we accepted it and we will not change our minds. If you want to betray us, go ahead." So they let them be, and they wrote to 'Umar telling him of that. He wrote back saying, "Allah has placed a great deal of emphasis on the importance of fulfilling treaties, and you will not be sincere until you fulfil your promises. If you are in doubt, then accept the deal and fulfil the covenant towards them." So the Muslims fulfilled the promise and left them alone.[216]

These examples show how the Muslims excelled over their *kâfir* enemies in the field of good attitudes. Undoubtedly this moral superiority was one of the basic reasons that motivated the *kuffâr* to enter Islam in such huge numbers and with such alacrity.[217]

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[216] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/72.

[217] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 11/217.

2.10.1. An-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin and the city of Kaskar

An-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin was the governor of Kaskar. He wrote to 'Umar saying, "The likeness of me and Kaskar is that of a young man with a painted and perfumed prostitute by his side. I adjure you by Allah to relieve me of my post in Kaskar, and send me to join one of the Muslim armies." So 'Umar wrote to him, saying, "Go and join the army in Nahawand, and you are in charge of them."[218]

3. The Battle of Nahawand (The Conquest of Conquests) — The Fourth Stage, 21 A.H.

The Muslims had been victorious over the Persian armies in numerous consecutive battles, and they pursued the remnants of those armies without giving them the chance to catch their breath. Between their crushing victory in the battle of al-Qâdisiyah in Iraq and the decisive battle in Nahawand there were four years, during which the Muslims achieved one victory after another. Their armies would have gone on to put an end to the last remnants of the army of an aging empire, were it not for the orders of the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ), who told them to stop at the Zagharoos (Zagros) mountains and not go beyond that point. Those orders were for the purpose of reorganizing the army which was exhausted from continual fighting, and to organize the administration of the conquered regions.[219]

The defeats that the Muslims inflicted on the Persians one after another, especially after al-Qâdisiyah, made the Persians angry and

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[218] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/109.
[219] See: *al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*.

resentful. It seems that it was not enough to put a final end to their resistance. Their leaders and commanders wrote to their king Yazdagird, urging him to resume the fight, so he decided to do that. He made preparations to go back and fight the Muslims with whatever he had left in his land of fortresses and strongholds. He wrote to the people of the mountains, from al-Bâb to Sajistân and Khorasân telling them to mobilize to meet the Muslims. He designated Nahawand as the meeting-point, choosing it for the final resistance and decisive battle because it was well protected, surrounded by mountains on all sides and only accessible through rugged and difficult mountain passes. The Persians gathered in this city, where Yazdagird assembled one hundred and fifty thousand fighters: thirty thousand from the area between al-Bâb and Hulwân, sixty thousand from the area between Khorasan and Ḥulwân, and a similar number from the area between Sajistan and Ḥulwân. Yazdagird appointed al-Fayrazân in command of them.

A letter was sent to 'Umar, informing him of these developments and asking for his instructions, explaining the situation to him from all aspects. In Madeenah, 'Umar assembled the wise men of the Muslims and consulted them concerning the matter, then he decided to send an army to fight the Persians in their last stronghold, Nahawand. At that time an-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin al-Muzani was the governor of Kaskar, and he had written a letter to the caliph in which he had said, "The likeness of me and Kaskar is that of a young man with a painted and perfumed prostitute by his side. I adjure you by Allah to relieve me of my post in Kaskar, and send me to join one of the Muslim armies."[220] 'Umar consulted his *Shoora* assembly and decided to appoint an-Nu'mân as commander of the Muslim army in Nahawand. The caliph drew up a plan to mobilize the Muslim army in the following fashion:

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[220] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/109.

- An-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin al-Muzani (the governor of Kaskar) was to be the commander-in-chief of the army
- Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân was to be the commander of the detachment drawn from the people of Koofah
- Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (the governor of Baṣra) was to be the commander of the detachment drawn from the people of Baṣra
- 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar (ibn al-Khaṭṭâb) was to be the commander of the detachment drawn from the *Muhâjireen* and Anṣâr
- Salma ibn al-Qayyin, Ḥarmalah ibn Muraytah, Zurr ibn Kulayb, al-Aswad ibn Rabee'ah and other Muslim commanders in al-Ahwâz and other parts of Persia were to form reserve troops that would distract the enemy

'Umar wrote to the governors and commanders with his instructions, and he managed to mobilize an army of some thirty thousand warriors.[221] The Muslim army, under the command of an-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin, set off towards Nahawand, which they found to be fortified strongly, surrounded by a deep ditch, in front of which were sharp spikes which formed an obstacle for the attackers, and threatened to harm their horses by injuring their feet so that they could not longer walk. The Persian army inside the walls of the city was in a state of readiness. The army in Nahawand had been joined by those who were not present at al-Qâdisiyah, and al-Fayrazân had stationed archers at the points where the Muslims were expected to attack so that they could shoot their arrows at them if they tried to advance.[222] The Muslim cavalry was faced with the spikes and the ditch beyond them, and could not cross them, whilst the Persian archers started to shoot at the Muslim troops who managed to get

[221] See: *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi.*
[222] Ibid.

near the walls. This carried on for two days. An-Nu'mân decided to gather the top commanders of the army to study the situation, and they reached the conclusion that they should adopt the following plan, which was devised by Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi: "The Muslim cavalry would go out and start a fight with the Persians, provoking them to come out from behind their walls. When they came out, the Muslim cavalry would move back before them, so that they would think that they were retreating out of weakness and would hope to score a victory and start to chase them. The Muslim cavalry would pretend to be defeated, and whilst the Persians were outside their walls and fortifications, other Muslims who had hidden in camouflaged places would take them by surprise and ambush them far away from their fortifications."[223]

An-Nu'mân started to implement this plan, and divided his troops up into groups as follows: the first group was the cavalry, led by al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr; their mission was to deceive the enemy according to the plan described above, by attacking the walls of the enemy city and trying to start a fight.

The second group, under his own leadership, was to hide in concealed places and wait for the Persians to reach them, whereupon they would attack them and fight them face to face.

The third group was another detachment of cavalry, who were the strongest force of the army. Their mission was to hide in camouflaged places then attack the enemy forces from two sides.

An-Nu'mân ordered the Muslims to stay in their hideouts and not fight until he gave them permission.[224] The Muslims obeyed this command and waited for the signal from an-Nu'mân to attack. Al-

[223] See: *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/113.
[224] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/114.

Qa'qâ' started to carry out the plan and succeeded brilliantly. The Persians were astounded to find themselves surrounded by the Muslim forces who were mowing them down. The *mushrikeen* started fleeing towards their fortifications, but they fell into their ditches and onto their spikes. The Muslims continued to pursue them, wielding their swords against their backs, until thousands of Persians fell into the ditch. Al-Qa'qâ' pursued al-Fayrazân and managed to catch up with him and finish him off. After this battle, the Muslims entered Nahawand, then Hamadhân, after which they went on to complete their conquest of the rest of Persia without encountering any resistance worth mentioning. After Nahawand, the Persians did not regroup again, and the Muslims took over their land. Hence the battle of Nahawand was known as "the conquest of conquests."[225]

In the battle of Nahawand the deep insight of 'Umar was made manifest in several ways, such as his mobilizing Muslim troops and preventing the enemy from mobilizing; the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ) did not stop at ordering his governors in Koofah, Baṣrah and Arabia to mobilize in order to fight the Persians, rather he ordered his commanders in al-Ahwâz and the rest of Persia to prevent the enemy from mobilizing. He instructed Salma ibn al-Qayyin, Ḥarmalah ibn Muraytah, Zurr ibn Kulayb, al-Aswad ibn Rabee'ah and others to stand guard at the border between Persia and al-Ahwâz, to prevent the Persians from joining the army that was being mobilized in Nahawand. Thus these commanders guarded the border and prevented reinforcements from reaching Nahawand.[226]

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[225] See: *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi.*
[226] Ibid.

3.1. Appointment of commanders if any commanders of the army died

During the battle of Mu'tah (8 A.H. / 629 C.E.), when the Prophet (ﷺ) appointed Zayd ibn al-Ḥârithah as commander of the Muslims, he stipulated that if Zayd died, then Ja'far ibn Abi Ṭâlib was to lead the people. If Ja'far died, then 'Abdullâh ibn Rawâḥah was to take over. 'Umar did the same thing with regard to the battle of Nahawand, when he appointed an-Nu'mân in charge of the Muslims; if anything happened to an-Nu'mân, then Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân was to take over, and if anything happened to Ḥudhayfah, then Nu'aym ibn Muqarrin was to take over. An-Nu'mân was distinguished by his high level of leadership, which was manifested in several ways, as follows:

3.1.1. Sending out scouts before setting out to fight

Before marching out with his army towards Nahawand, which was twenty-odd parasangs away, an-Nu'mân sent Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi, 'Amr ibn Abi Salma al-'Anzi and 'Amr ibn Ma'di Yakrib on ahead to scout out the route and find out if there were any enemy troops in the area. The three men travelled for one day and one night, then they came back and informed their commander-in-chief that there was nothing to worry about between here and Nahawand. This mission was akin to what is known nowadays as reconnaissance, where any army sends out scouts to check the route before proceeding. In addition to that, an-Nu'mân took all kinds of precautions when moving his army, keeping them in a state of readiness to fight at any moment.

3.1.2. The trick to deceive the enemy

The trick which the Muslims used to deceive the enemy in Nahawand was one of the most brilliant military manoeuvres that have ever been used by any army in history, ancient or modern. When the Muslims found themselves unable to breach the fortified walls of the city which was protected with ditches, spikes and skilled archers, they realized that the siege would take a long time and would meet with no success so long as the Persians inside the walls of the city had enough supplies to hold out for a long time. So they decided to resort to tricks aimed at drawing the enemy out so that they could fight them outside the walls in a place that they themselves had chosen. What happened was entirely in accordance with the Muslims' plan. They drew the enemy out to the places that the Muslims had chosen for the battle, hiding and then ambushing them in those places from all directions. So the Persians were taken unawares and panicked, then feeling helpless they ran away. There is no better trick that an army could use to draw out the enemy and overpower them.[227]

3.1.3. Choosing the time of attack

The history books speak of the patience of an-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin and his genius in choosing the same time for attack as that favoured by the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), which was just after midday when the shadows begin to lengthen and the wind is blowing. An-Nu'mân ibn Muqarrin attained martyrdom in this decisive battle. When news of an-Nu'mân reached the caliph he said, "Verily, to Allah we belong and unto Him is our return." He wept and grieved deeply, and asked about the martyrs, and was told some names that he did not recognize. He said, "Those are the weak and oppressed

[227] See: *al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, Pp. 295, 296.

among the Muslims, but the One Who has honoured them with martyrdom knows their faces and lineages; what does it matter whether 'Umar knows them or not?"[228]

It is worth mentioning that among the booty of Nahawand, the Muslims found two chests filled with precious jewels from the stores of Chosroes. Ḥudhayfah, the commander of the army, sent them to 'Umar with as-Sâ'ib ibn al-Aqra'. When he brought them to him he said, "Put them in the *bayt al-mâl*, and go back to your division." He set off, and 'Umar sent someone after him who caught up with him in Koofah and brought him back.[229] When 'Umar saw him he said, "What is this you brought to me? On the night that you departed, I dreamt all night that the angels were dragging me to these chests that were filled with fire, warning me that they would brand me with fire if I did not share them out. Take them away and sell them, and buy provisions for the Muslims." So he sold them in the market of Koofah.

May Allah be pleased with you, O' 'Umar, for you followed in the footsteps of your Prophet and Allah granted you pride and dignity and He granted pride and dignity to Islam and the Muslims. O' Allah, help us to follow in his footsteps and suffice us against the evils of innovation.[230]

After the battle of Nahawand, the Persian leaders from Hamadhân, Ṭabaristân and Isfahan hastened to seek peace deals with the Muslims, one after another.[231]

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[228] See: *al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/113.

[229] Ibid, 7/114.

[230] See: *Itmâm al-Wafa'*.

[231] Ibid, Pp. 99-101.

4. Penetration of Persian Lands — The Fifth Stage

After the Muslim victory in the battle of Nahawand, the Persians could not offer any further resistance. 'Umar gave the Muslims permission to penetrate deeply into the Persian lands, and after Nahawand the Muslims reached the city of Jayy, which is also known as Isfahan.[232] After a lengthy period of fighting, they made a peace deal with the Muslims and 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abdullâh wrote them a document granting them peace and security. Thirty men fled from them towards Karmân and did not make a peace deal with the Muslims. In 21 A.H., Abu Moosa conquered Qom and Qashân[233], and Suhayl ibn 'Adiyy conquered Karmân.

4.1. The conquest of Hamadhân for the second time in 22 A.H.

When the Muslims had finished with Nahawand, they conquered Ḥulwân and Hamadhân, then the people of Hamadhân broke the treaty that they had made with al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr. 'Umar wrote to Na'eem ibn Muqarrin, telling him to march on Hamadhân. He went there and camped in a place called Thaniyat al-'Asl, then he went down to Hamadhân, where he conquered the surrounding land and besieged the city. They asked him for a peace deal and he made a deal with them and entered the city with twelve thousand Muslims. Whilst he was in Hamadhân, letters were exchanged between the Daylam and the leaders of Azerbaijan, who gathered in large numbers to fight Na'eem ibn Muqarrin. He went out to meet them, accompanied by the Muslims who were with him, and they met in a

[232] One of the major cities of Persia. [Author]

[233] Qom and Qashân: Two cities which are always mentioned together. [Author]

place called Wâj ar-Ruwâdh.[234] They fought an intense battle which was on the scale of Nahawand, no less than that. Innumerable *mushrikeen* were killed, as was the king of the Daylam, who were utterly decimated. Those who were not killed in the battle fled.

Na'eem ibn Muqarrin was the first of the Muslims to fight the Daylam.[235] Na'eem had written to 'Umar telling him of his encounter with them, and 'Umar was very upset and worried about that. But soon, to his surprise, mail came with good news. He asked the messenger: "Are you a *basheer* (a bringer of glad tidings)?" He said, "No, I am 'Urwah."[236] When 'Umar asked the question a second time, he understood and said, "(I am) a bringer of glad tidings." 'Umar asked, "Are you the envoy of Na'eem or of Sammâk ibn 'Ubayd?" He said, "The envoy of Na'eem." He said, "What is the news?" He said, "Glad tidings of conquest and victory." He told him the good news, and he praised Allah and ordered that the letter be read out to the people, and they praised Allah too.

Then Sammâk ibn Makhramah and Sammâk ibn 'Ubayd and Sammâk ibn Kharashah came with a delegation from Koofah, bringing the *khums* to 'Umar. He asked them about their lineage and all three of them told him. Then he said, "May Allah bless you. O' Allah, support Islam by them and support them by Islam."[237]

4.2. The conquest of ar-Rayy, 22 A.H.

Na'eem ibn Muqarrin appointed Yazeed ibn Qays al-Hamadhâni in his place, and set out with the army for ar-Rayy.[238]

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[234] Wâj ar-Ruwâdh: A place between Hamadhân and Qazween. [Author]

[235] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâya*, p. 160.

[236] The man thought that 'Umar was asking him whether his name was Basheer. [Translator]

[237] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/134.

[238] Ar-Rayy: A well known city which is twenty-seven parasangs from Qazween.

There they met a huge group of the *mushrikeen* and fought with them at the foot of the mountain of ar-Rayy. The *kâfirs* resisted with great patience but were finally defeated, and Na'eem ibn Muqarrin killed a large number of them. They took a huge amount of booty from them, almost as much as the Muslims had taken at al-Madâ'in. Then Na'eem wrote to 'Umar, telling him of the conquest, and he sent the *khums* to him. Praise be to Allah.[239]

4.3. The conquest of Qoomees and Jurjân, 22 A.H.

When the good news of the conquest of ar-Rayy came, and the *khums* from that conquest arrived, 'Umar wrote to Na'eem ibn Muqarrin, telling him to send his brother, Suwayd ibn Muqarrin, to Qoomees.[240] So Suwayd went there and he did not encounter any resistance, so he was able to take control peacefully. He camped there and wrote a peace treaty for its people, granting them security. When Suwayd camped in Qoomees, the people of various towns, including Jurjân[241], Ṭabaristân[242] and others, wrote to him asking for peace deals in return for paying the *jizyah*, so he made peace deals with all of them, writing a document for each town granting it peace and security.[243]

4.4. The conquest of Azerbaijan, 22 A.H.

When Na'eem ibn Muqarrin conquered Hamadhân for the second time then ar-Rayy, he sent Bukayr ibn 'Abdullâh ahead of

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[239] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/136, 137.

[240] Qoomees: Located at the end of the mountains of Ṭabaristân, between ar-Rayy and Nisapur.

[241] Jurjân: A large city between Ṭabaristân and Khorasan.

[242] Ṭabaristân: A large region which is mostly mountainous and is famous for producing scholars and literati.

[243] *Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 161.

him from Hamadhân to Azerbaijan, and he sent Sammâk ibn Kharashah after him. This was done on 'Umar's instructions, and this Sammâk was not the well-known *Ṣaḥâbi* Abu Dujânah. Bukayr and his companions were met by Asfandiyâdh ibn al-Farrukhzâdh before Sammâk joined him. They fought and Allah defeated the *mushrikeen*, and Bukayr took Asfandiyâdh captive. He said to him, "Is peace dearer to you, or war?" He said, "Peace." Then he said, "Keep me with you," so he kept him with him. Then he started to conquer Azerbaijan, city by city, and 'Utbah ibn Farqad was moving parallel to him on the other side of Azerbaijan, conquering it city by city. Then the letter of 'Umar came, telling Bukayr to go to al-Bâb. So he appointed Sammâk to take his place as the deputy of 'Utbah ibn Farqad. 'Umar put all of Azerbaijan under the control of 'Utbah ibn Farqad, and Bukayr handed Asfandiyâdh over to him. Bahram ibn Farrukhzâdh came to fight 'Utbah ibn Farqad, and 'Utbah defeated him and Bahrâm fled. When Asfandiyâdh heard of that he said, "Now there can be peace and no more war." So a peace treaty was made and peace returned to Azerbaijan, and 'Utbah and Bukayr wrote to 'Umar telling him the good news and they sent the *khums* to him. When 'Utbah became governor of Azerbaijan he wrote a peace treaty for its people.[244]

4.5. The conquest of al-Bâb, 22 A.H.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb wrote a letter appointing Surâqah ibn 'Amr, who was known as Dhu an-Noor, as commander in charge of this campaign, and he set out with his army as instructed by 'Umar. When the vanguard of the army, 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Rabee'ah, reached the king who was there at al-Bâb, who was Shahrabarâz the king of Armenia, a descendant of the king who had killed the

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[244] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/141, 142.

Children of Israel and conquered Syria in ancient times, Shahrabarâz wrote to 'Abdur-Raḥmân asking him for protection. 'Abdur-Raḥmân granted him protection. The king came to 'Abdur-Raḥmân, seeking to give an impression that he was in favour of the Muslims and was sincere towards them. He said to him, "There is another man above me, go to him." He sent him to Surâqah ibn 'Amr, the commander of the army, and he asked Surâqah for protection, so Surâqah wrote a document to that effect. Then Surâqah sent Bukayr ibn 'Abdullâh al-Laythi, Ḥabeeb ibn Maslamah, Ḥudhayfah ibn Usayd and Salmân ibn Rabee'ah to the people of the mountains that surrounded Armenia, the mountains of al-Lân, Tafileeses and Mooqân. Bukayr conquered Mooqân, and wrote a peace treaty for them. During that time the Muslim commander of that region, Surâqah ibn 'Amr, died and was succeeded by 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Rabee'ah. When 'Umar heard of that he approved and told him to attack the Turks.[245]

4.6. The beginning of the campaign against the Turks

When 'Umar's letter reached 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Rabee'ah, ordering him to attack the Turks, he set out and passed al-Bâb, intending to do what 'Umar had commanded. Shahrabarâz asked him: "Where are you going?" He said, "I am looking for the king of the Turks, Balanjar." Shahrabarâz said to him, "Usually if we leave them alone and they leave us alone we will be happy." 'Abdur-Raḥmân said, "Allah sent to us a Messenger and promised us on his lips that we would be victorious and would continue to be so." So he fought the Turks and penetrated two hundred parasangs into the land of Balanjar, fighting many battles. Then huge and terrifying battles took place during the time of 'Uthmân (ﷺ).[246]

[245] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/145.
[246] Ibid, 5/142-147.

4.7. The campaign of Khorasan, 22 A.H.

Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays advised 'Umar that the Muslims should expand further in the Persian land and corner the Chosroes Yazdagird, because he was the one who was inciting the Persians and the troops to fight the Muslims. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb gave permission for that, based on al-Aḥnaf's advice. He appointed al-Aḥnaf as a commander and told him to attack Khorasan. Al-Aḥnaf set out with a huge army and headed for Khorasan, intending to make war on Yazdagird. He entered Khorasan and conquered Herat by force, appointing Ṣuḥâr ibn Fulân al-'Abdi in charge of it, then he headed towards Marw Shahjân[247], where Yazdagird was. Al-Aḥnaf sent Mutarrif ibn 'Abdullâh ibn as-Sakheer ahead of him to Nisapur[248] and al-Ḥârith ibn Ḥassân to Sarkhas.[249] When al-Aḥnaf approached Marw Shahjân, Yazdagird left the city and went to Marw Roodh.[250] Al-Aḥnaf conquered Marw Shahjân and stayed there. When Yazdagird reached Marw Roodh, he wrote to Khâqân the king of the Turks, the king of aṣ-Ṣaghd and the king of China, asking them for help. Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays pursued him to Marw Roodh, leaving Ḥârithah ibn an-Nu'mân in charge of Marw Shahjân. Reinforcements from Koofah came to al-Aḥnaf with four commanders, and when Yazdagird heard of that, he went to Balkh.[251] They met up with him in Balkh, where Allah defeated him, and he and those who were left of his army fled across the river. Thus Khorasan came completely

[247] Marw Shahjân: This is the greater city of Marw and was the capital of Khorasan.

[248] Nisapur: A famous city of this region.

[249] Sarkhas: A city halfway between Marw and Nisapur.

[250] Marw Roodh: Located on a large river, but it was smaller than the other Marw.

[251] Balkh: One of the most beautiful cities of Khorasan, which is located near the Jayjoon river.

under the control of al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays, who appointed a governor for each city, then he returned to Marw Roodh and wrote to 'Umar, telling him of the conquests that Allah had granted in the land of Khorasan. 'Umar wrote to al-Aḥnaf forbidding him to cross the river and saying: "Keep what you have gained control of in the land of Khorasan."

When the envoy of Yazdagird reached those whose help he was seeking, they did not care to help, but when Yazdagird crossed the river and entered their lands, then they had to help him because that was the custom of kings. Khâqân went with him to Balkh and then they camped at Marw Roodh, where al-Aḥnaf was. Al-Aḥnaf came out with the people of Baṣrah and Koofah who were with him, all twenty thousand of them, and he heard one man saying to another, "If the commander has any sense, he will stand at the foot of this mountain, putting it at his back, and with this river like a ditch in front of him, so that the enemy can only come from one direction." The following morning, al-Aḥnaf ordered his troops to take up that position, and this was a sign of victory and wisdom. The Turks and Persians came with a huge and alarming number of troops. Al-Aḥnaf stood up and addressed the people, saying: "You are few and your enemies are many, but do not be dismayed.

﴾How often a small group overcame a mighty host by Allah's Leave? And Allah is with *aṣ-Ṣâbiroon* [the patient]﴿ *(Qur'an 2: 249)*."

The Turks used to fight by day and al-Aḥnaf did not know where they went at night. So one night he went out with one of his scouts looking for Khâqân. When it was almost dawn, one of the Turkish horsemen came out, wearing a necklace and beating a drum. Al-Aḥnaf went up to him and they fought and stabbed one another, but al-Aḥnaf killed him. Then he took the Turk's necklace and stood in his place. Another one came out wearing a necklace and carrying a

drum. When he started to beat it, al-Aḥnaf approached him and killed him, taking his necklace and standing in his place. A third one came out and he killed him and took his necklace. Then al-Aḥnaf hastened to return to his army. None of the Turks knew anything at all about that. It was the Turks' custom not to come out until three of their mature men had gone out beating a drum, one after another. When the Turks came out they found their slain horsemen and the king Khâqân regarded this as a bad omen. He said to his troops: "We have been out too long and these men have been killed in a place where this has never happened to us before. There is nothing to be achieved by fighting these people; let us leave." So they went back to their country.[252]

The Muslims said to al-Aḥnaf: "What do you think about pursuing them?" He said, "Stay where you are and let them be." And al-Aḥnaf was right, for it says in the hadith, «"Leave the Turks alone so long as they leave you alone."»[253]

﴾And Allah drove back those who disbelieved in their rage: they gained no advantage [booty]. Allah sufficed for the believers in the fighting [by sending against the disbelievers a severe wind and troops of angels]. And Allah is Ever All-Strong, All-Mighty.﴿ *(Qur'an 33: 25)*

Chosroes went back frustrated, having failed to achieve what he wanted or to gain the support he had hoped for. All those from whom he had hoped to get support abandoned him and disowned him when he needed them most.

﴾... And he whom Allah has made to go astray, you will never find for him any way [of guidance].﴿ *(Qur'an 4: 88)*

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[252] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/159.

[253] *Aṭ-Ṭabarâni, al-Kabeer.* Shaykh al-Albâni said: It is *mawḍoo'* (fabricated). *Silsilat al-Aḥâdeeth aḍ-Ḍa'eefah,* no. 1747.

He was confused and did not know what to do or where to go. Then he sent word to the king of China, seeking his help. The king of China asked the messenger about the people who had conquered the land and subjugated the people, so the envoy told him about them, how they rode horses and camels, what they did and how they prayed. He sent a letter with him to Yazdagird saying, "The reason why I did not send you an army the front of which would be in Marw whilst the back was in China is not that I do not know what my duty is towards you; rather it is because these people whom your envoy described to me, if they picked a fight with the mountains they would crush them, and if I came to support you they would defeat me, if they are as your envoy described them to me. So try to make a peace deal with them." Chosroes and his family went and settled in some part of the land, humiliated and defeated, and he remained there until he was killed during the caliphate of 'Uthmân.[254]

When al-Aḥnaf arrived with a letter describing the victory and the booty that Allah had bestowed on them from the wealth of the Turks and those who were with them, and how they had killed many of them, and how Allah had driven back those who disbelieved in their rage, and they gained no advantage, 'Umar stood up on the *minbar* and the letter was read out before him, then 'Umar said: "Allah sent Muhammad with true guidance, and promised his followers reward in this world and in the Hereafter, and He (ﷻ) said,

❴It is He Who has sent His Messenger [Muhammad] with guidance and the religion of truth [Islam], to make it superior over all religions even though the *Mushrikoon* [polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah] hate [it].❵ *(Qur'an 9: 33)*

Praise be to Allah Who has fulfilled His promise and granted victory to His troops. Allah has destroyed the kingdom of Persia and

[254] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/160.

scattered them, and they no longer control even a handspan of their land that could have any effect on a Muslim. Allah has granted their land, houses, wealth and people as an inheritance to you, to see what you will do. So adhere to His commands and He will fulfil His covenant with You. Do not change, lest He replace you with another people, for I fear that if anything bad happens to this ummah it will be because of you."[255]

4.8. The conquest of Iṣṭakhar, 23 A.H.

The Muslims conquered Iṣṭakhar for the second time in 23 A.H. Its people had broken the treaty after the troops of al-'Ala' ibn al-Ḥaḍrami had conquered it when they crossed the sea, coming from the land of al-Baḥrayn (Bahrain). They met the Persians in a place called Ṭâwus, then al-Hirbadhah made a treaty whereby in return for paying the *jizyah* they would receive protection. Then Shahrak broke the treaty and incited the Persians to do likewise. 'Uthmân ibn Abi al-'Âṣ sent his son and his brother al-Ḥakam to fight them, and Allah defeated the *mushrik* army, and al-Ḥakam ibn Abi al-'Âṣ killed Shahrak.[256]

4.9. The conquest of Fasawdara Bajrud, 23 A.H.

Sâriyah ibn Zunaym headed for Fasawdara Bajrud, where he met a huge number of Persians and Kurds. The Muslims grew very anxious, and that night 'Umar in his dream saw their battle and their numbers; the battle was taking place in the daytime and they were in a desert, and there was a mountain which, if they put it at their backs, the enemy could only attack them from one direction. The next day

[255] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/162, 163.
[256] Ibid, 5/166.

he gave the call, "*aṣ-Ṣalâtu Jâmi'ah* (prayer is about to begin)," and when it was the hour that he had seen the fighting in his dream, he came out to the people, ascended the *minbar* and addressed the people, telling them of what he had seen. Then he said, "O' Sâriyah, the mountain!" Then he turned to them and said: "Allah has troops (angels) and perhaps some of them will convey it to them." And they did what 'Umar said, and Allah granted them victory over their enemies, and they conquered that land.[257]

4.10. The conquest of Karmân and Sajistan, 23 A.H.

Suhayl ibn 'Adiyy conquered Karmân in 23 A.H.[258]; it was also said that it was conquered by 'Abdullâh ibn Budayl ibn Warqa' al-Khuzâ'i.[259]. Some historians say that Sajistân was conquered by 'Âṣim ibn 'Amr, after intense fighting. Its fortresses were numerous and its cities were far apart, between the dam and the river of Balkh, and they used to fight the Qandahâr and the Turks.[260]

4.11. The conquest of Mukrân, 23 A.H.

In 23 A.H., Mukrân was conquered by al-Ḥakam ibn 'Amr. Shihâb ibn al-Makhâriq brought reinforcements and he was joined by Suhayl ibn 'Adiyy and 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abdullâh ibn 'Uthân. They fought with the king of as-Sind, and Allah defeated the armies of as-Sind and they captured a great deal of booty. Al-Ḥakam ibn 'Amr

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[257] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/168, 169. It was also narrated by al-Lâlkâ'i in *Sharḥ Uṣool I'tiqâd Ahl as-Sunnah*, no. 2537. Shaykh al-Albâni classed its isnad as *ḥasan* in his commentary on *Mishkât al-Maṣâbeeḥ*, 3/1678, hadith no. 5954. See: *Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 170.

[258] *Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 171.

[259] Ibid, p. 171.

[260] Ibid.

sent a letter to 'Umar, telling him the news of the conquest. He sent the letter, along with the *khums*, with Ṣuḥâr al-'Abdi. When he came to 'Umar, he asked him about the land of Mukrân and he said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, its land is mountainous, its water is scarce, its dates are bad, the enemy is tough, its good is little and its evil is great. Much there is a little and a little is wasted, and what lies beyond it is even worse." 'Umar asked, "Are you trying to be a poet?" He said, "No, it is just information." 'Umar wrote to al-Ḥakam ibn 'Amr, telling him not to go beyond Mukrân, and to stay on this side of the river.[261]

4.12. The campaign against the Kurds

Ibn Jareer mentioned, with his isnad from Sayf from his Shaykhs, that some of the Kurds were joined by some of the Persians. They gathered and were met by Abu Moosa in a place in the land of Bayroodh that was near the Teera river.[262] Then Abu Moosa left for Isfahan, leaving ar-Rabee' ibn Ziyâd to fight them after the murder of his brother al-Muhâjir ibn Ziyâd. He took charge of the war and throttled them, and Allah defeated the enemy, to Him be praise. This is the way of Allah with His believing slaves, the followers of the best of His Messengers. Then the *khums* was taken from the booty and sent, with news of the victory, to 'Umar (ﷺ).[263] Thus Iraq and Iran were conquered at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ). The Muslims established strongholds throughout these regions, expecting a backlash from the Persians in these lands. The conquest of the East was very difficult and demanded great sacrifices on the part of the Muslims, because of the differences in race. The inhabitants of Iran

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[261] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/172, 173, 174.

[262] Bayroodh and the Teera river are places near al-Ahwâz.

[263] *Tahdheeb wa Tarteeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 172.

were Persians who has no ties of language, race or culture to the Arabs, and the national feelings of the Iranians were strong, fed by a lengthy history and deeply-rooted culture. Moreover the fighting was taking place in the Iranian heartland, and the Magian clergy played their part in inciting the inhabitants to resist. In addition to that, these regions were far away from the military centres of Baṣra and Koofah, and the land was mountainous which enabled the inhabitants to resist. Hence most of the cities broke their treaties and were re-conquered during the time of 'Umar or during the caliphate of 'Uthmân.[264]

5. The Most Important Lessons We Learn From the Conquests of Iraq and the East

5.1. The effect of verses and *aḥâdeeth* on the morale of the *Mujâhideen*

The verses and *aḥâdeeth* which speak of the virtue of jihad had an effect on the morale of the *Mujâhideen*. Allah states that every action of the *Mujâhideen* will be rewarded. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴾It was not becoming of the people of Madeenah and the bedouins of the neighbourhood to remain behind Allah's Messenger [Muhammad, when fighting in Allah's Cause] and [it was not becoming of them] to prefer their own lives to his life. That is because they suffer neither thirst nor fatigue nor hunger in the Cause of Allah, nor they take any step to raise the anger of disbelievers nor inflict any injury upon an enemy but is written to their credit as a deed of righteousness. Surely, Allah wastes not the reward of the *Muḥsinoon*. Nor do they spend anything [in Allah's Cause] — small

264 *'Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, Pp. 339, 340.

or great — nor cross a valley, but is written to their credit that Allah may recompense them with the best of what they used to do.﴿ *(Qur'an 9: 120-121)*

The early Muslims were certain that jihad is a successful transaction. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴾O' you who believe! Shall I guide you to a trade that will save you from a painful torment? That you believe in Allah and His Messenger [Muhammad], and that you strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives, that will be better for you, if you but know! [If you do so] He will forgive you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow, and pleasant dwellings in *'Adn* [Eden] Paradise; that is indeed the great success. And also [He will give you] another [blessing] which you love, — help from Allah [against your enemies] and a near victory. And give glad tidings [O' Muhammad] to the believe.﴿ *(Qur'an 61: 10-13)*

They knew that jihad is better than taking care of *al-Masjid al-Ḥarâm* and providing water to the pilgrims, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴾Do you consider the providing of drinking water to the pilgrims and the maintenance of *al-Masjid al-Ḥarâm* [at Makkah] as equal to the worth of those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah? They are not equal before Allah. And Allah guides not those people who are the *Dhâlimoon* [polytheists and wrongdoers]. Those who believed [in the Oneness of Allah — Islamic Monotheism] and emigrated and strove hard and fought in Allah's Cause with their wealth and their lives, are far higher in degree with Allah. They are the successful. Their Lord gives them glad tidings of mercy from Him, and His being pleased [with them], and of Gardens [Paradise] for them wherein are everlasting delights. They will dwell therein forever. Verily, with Allah is a great reward.﴿ *(Qur'an 9: 19-22)*

They believed that jihad was a victory in all cases. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴾Say, 'Do you wait for us [anything] except one of the two best things [martyrdom or victory]; while we await for you either that Allah will afflict you with a punishment from Himself or at our hands. So wait, we too are waiting with you.'﴿ *(Qur'an 9: 52)*

And the life of the martyr does not come to an end; rather he is alive as Allah, the Exalted says:

﴾Think not of those as dead who are killed in the way of Allah. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision. They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounty and rejoice for the sake of those who have not yet joined them, but are left behind [not yet martyred] that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve. They rejoice in a grace and a bounty from Allah, and that Allah will not waste the reward of the believers.﴿

(Qur'an 3: 169-171)

They felt that the goal for which they were fighting was a sublime one. Allah says:

﴾Let those [believers] who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter fight in the Cause of Allah, and whoso fights in the Cause of Allah, and is killed or gets victory, We shall bestow on him a great reward. And what is wrong with you that you fight not in the Cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children, whose cry is, 'Our Lord! Rescue us from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help.' Those who believe, fight in the Cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve, fight in the cause of *Ṭâghoot* [Satan]. So fight you against the friends of *Shayṭân* [Satan]; ever feeble indeed is the plot of *Shayṭân* [Satan].﴿

(Qur'an 4: 74-76)

The Messenger (ﷺ) explained to the Muslims the virtue of jihad, and these *aḥâdeeth* motivated them greatly. Among these *aḥâdeeth* is that which was narrated from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (ﷺ), who said: «It was asked, "O' Messenger of Allah, which of the people is best?" The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "A believer who strives in jihad with himself and his wealth."»[265] The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) explained the degrees of the *Mujâhideen* when he said: «"In Paradise there are one hundred degrees which Allah has prepared for those who strive in jihad for the sake of Allah. The distance between two degrees is like that between heaven and earth. If you ask of Allah, ask Him for *al-Firdaws*, for it is the best part of Paradise and is the highest part of Paradise."»[266]

The Prophet (ﷺ) explained the virtue of the martyrs when he said: «"Allah has promised those who go out (in jihad) for His sake, ﴾not going out for any reason except belief in Me and belief in My Messengers, but I will bring him back with the reward and booty that he has attained, or I will admit him to Paradise.﴿ Were it not that it would be too hard for my ummah, I would not have stayed behind from any campaign. I wish that I could be killed for the sake of Allah then brought back to life, then killed then brought back to life, then killed."»[267] And he (ﷺ) said: «"No one who enters Paradise would like to come back to this world and have everything in it, except for the martyr, who wishes that he could come back to this world and be killed ten times over, because of what he sees of the honour that Allah bestows upon him."»[268]

And there are other *aḥâdeeth* which affected the first Muslims and those who followed the same path, based on these verses and

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[265] Bukhari, hadith no. 2786.

[266] Ibid, hadith no. 2790.

[267] Muslim, 3/1497.

[268] Bukhari, hadith no. 2817.

aḥâdeeth. The senior *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them all) went out on campaigns even when they had grown old. The people felt sorry for them and urged them to stop fighting, because they were excused, but they responded by saying that *Soorah at-Tawbah* would not let them stop, and they feared that they might become hypocrites if they stayed behind and did not go out to fight.[269]

5.2. The fruits of jihad for the sake of Allah

The *Ṣaḥâbah* and *Tâbi'een* during the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs believed that jihad for the sake of Allah was one of the necessities for the survival of the Muslim ummah. They undertook this obligation when conquering Iraq, the east, Syria, Egypt and North Africa. Their undertaking of this obligation bore many fruits, such as qualifying the Muslim ummah to lead mankind; putting an end to the power of the *kuffâr*, humiliating them and instilling fear in their hearts; and making manifest the truth of their call to mankind, which made the people enter into the religion of Allah in crowds. Thus the Muslims increased in pride and the *kuffâr* increased in humiliation. The Muslims united against their enemies and they brought to mankind the blessings of the light, justice and mercy of Islam.[270]

5.3. Laws of Allah that were manifested in the conquests of Iraq and the eastern lands

By studying the conquests of Iraq and the eastern lands, the researcher will notice some of the laws of Allah with regard to

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[269] *Al-Jihâd fee Sabeel-Allâh* by al-Qâdiri, 1/145.
[270] Ibid, 2/411-482.

societies, people and states. These laws include the following:

5.3.1. The law of causes

Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴾And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war [tanks, planes, missiles, artillery] to threaten the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides whom, you may not know but whom Allah does know. And whatever you shall spend in the Cause of Allah shall be repaid unto you, and you shall not be treated unjustly.﴿ *(Qur'an 8: 60)*

'Umar applied this verse during his reign, employing both physical and spiritual means as we have explained above.

5.3.2. The law of checking people by means of one another

Allah, the Almighty says:

﴾... And if Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is full of bounty to the *'Âlameen* [mankind, jinn and all that exists].﴿ *(Qur'an 2: 251)*

This law was fulfilled by the conquest movement in general. This law is one of the most important laws of Allah in creation, and is one of the most important laws that have to do with consolidating the position of the Muslim ummah. The early Muslims understood this law and acted upon it. They knew that the truth needs resolve and determination to support it, efforts to make it prevail, hearts to love it and emotions to be tied to it. It needs human effort, because this is the law of Allah in the life of this world and this is a consistent law.[271]

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[271] *Liqâ' al-Mu'mineen* by 'Adnân an-Naḥwâ, 2/117.

5.3.3. The law of testing

Allah, the All-High says:

﴾Or think you that you will enter Paradise without such [trials] as came to those who passed away before you? They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken that even the Messenger and those who believed along with him said, 'When [will come] the Help of Allah?' Yes! Certainly, the Help of Allah is near!﴿ *(Qur'an 2: 214)*

Calamities and tests came during the conquest of Iraq, particularly in the battle of the bridge of Abu 'Ubayd, when thousands of Muslims were killed and their army was defeated. Then they regrouped and achieved great victories over the Persians. Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴾You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and in your personal selves...﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 186)*

It may be noted that the way in which this verse states that the Muslim ummah will be tested is stated in the most emphatic manner.[272] This is the law of Allah with regard to faith and calling others to faith: there has to be some calamity, some harm to wealth and self, and it is essential to be patient and stand firm.[273]

5.3.4. The law of Allah concerning oppression and the oppressed

Allah, the All-Powerful says:

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[272] *At-Takmeen li'l-Ummah al-Islâmiyah fee Ḍaw' al-Qur'an al-Kareem,* p. 237.

[273] *Tabṣeer al-Mu'mineen bi Fiqh an-Naṣr wa at-Tamkeen* by aṣ-Ṣallâbi, p. 456.

﴾That is some of the news of the [population of] towns which We relate unto you [O' Muhammad]; of them, some are [still] standing, and some have been [already] reaped. We wronged them not, but they wronged themselves. So their *âliha* [gods], other than Allah, whom they invoked, profited them naught when there came the Command of your Lord, nor did they add aught to them but destruction. Such is the Seizure of your Lord when He seizes the [population of] towns while they are doing wrong. Verily, His Seizure is painful [and] severe.﴿ *(Qur'an 11: 100-102)*

The law of Allah is consistent: oppressing nations will be destroyed. The Persian state had oppressed and wronged its subjects, and had rebelled against the laws of Allah. So the law of Allah was applied to them and Allah caused the Muslims to gain power over them, and thus they were eliminated.[274]

5.3.5. The law of Allah concerning those who live a life of luxury

Allah, the Ever Watchful says:

﴾And when We decide to destroy a town [population], We [first] send a definite order [to obey Allah and be righteous] to those among them [or We (first) increase in number those of its population] who lead a life of luxury. Then, they transgress therein, and thus the word [of torment] is justified against it [them]. Then We destroy it with complete destruction.﴿ *(Qur'an 17: 16)*

In the commentary on this verse it says: "When the time for its destruction draws nigh, We command those among them who live a life of luxury, their tyrants and their kings, to obey [Allah], then they

[274] *As-Sunan al-Ilâhiyah fee al-Umam wa al-Jamâ'ât wa al-Afrâd*, Pp. 119-121.

transgress therein, thus deserving the punishment, so We destroy them. Allah singles out for mention those who live a life of luxury, although the command to obey is addressed to all the people, because they are the leaders of evil and the chiefs of misguidance; what others do of sin is due to their following these leaders and being encouraged by them, so it is more apt that the command be addressed to them."[275]

This law came to pass concerning the leaders of the Persians.

5.3.6. The law of Allah concerning tyrants

Allah, the Exalted says:

﴾Verily, your Lord is Ever Watchful [over them].﴿

(Qur'an 89: 14)

This verse is a warning to sinners in general; it was also said that it is a warning to the *kuffâr*, or a warning to sinners and others.[276] In *Tafseer al-Qurṭubi* it says: i.e., Allah watches each person until He either rewards or punishes him.[277] It is clear from these comments of the *mufassireen* on the verses that we have quoted above that the law of Allah concerning tyrants is that He sends down the punishment upon them in this world. This is a consistent law which happened to the tyrants of the past and will happen to the tyrants of the present and the future. None of them will escape the punishment of Allah in this world, just as none of them will escape the punishment of Allah in the Hereafter.[278]

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[275] *Tafseer al-Aloosi*, 15/42.

[276] *As-Sunan al-Ilâhiyah*, p. 193.

[277] Ibid, p. 193, quoting from *Tafseer al-Qurṭubi*.

[278] *As-Sunan al-Ilâhiyah*, p. 194.

The law of Allah concerning the tyrants and the punishment that Allah has sent down on them in this world offer lessons from which those who fear Allah and His punishment, and who know that the laws of Allah are consistent and are not biased towards anyone may benefit. Allah (ﷻ) says, describing those who understand His law concerning tyrants, and after mentioning the bad end that befell Pharaoh:

﴿So Allah, seized him with punishment for his last and first transgression. Verily, in this is an instructive admonition for whosoever fears Allah.﴾ *(Qur'an 79: 25, 26)*

Thus the Persian tyrants were also subjected to the law of Allah.

5.3.7. The law of gradual progress

The conquests of Iraq and the eastern lands were subject to this law of gradual progress. The first stage took place during the time of Abu Bakr, when al-Ḥeerah was conquered under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed. The second stage began when Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi took over leadership of the army in Iraq, and lasted until the battle of al-Buwayb. The third stage started when Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ was appointed in charge of the jihad in Iraq and lasted until just before the battle of Nahawand. The fourth stage started with the battle of Nahawand and the fifth stage was when the Muslims penetrated throughout the Persian lands. From the conquests the Muslims learned the importance of paying attention to the law of gradual progress when working to support the religion of Allah. The basis for the law is the idea that the road is long, so it is essential for those who are working in the field of Islamic *da'wah* to understand this law. The consolidation of Islamic rule in Iraq and the eastern lands did not happen overnight, rather it was subject to this law, by Allah's will.

5.3.8. The law of changing oneself

Allah, the All-Compassionate says:

﴾Verily, Allah will not change the condition of a people as long as they do not change their state themselves.﴿ *(Qur'an 13: 11)*

The *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them) began the conquests of Iraq and the eastern lands by applying this divine principle with regard to the people who wanted to enter the religion of Allah. So they started to teach the people according to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ), instilling sound beliefs and ideas, and sublime characteristics, in their hearts.

5.3.9. The law of Allah concerning sins and evil deeds

Allah, the Almighty says:

﴾Have they not seen how many a generation before them We have destroyed whom We had established on the earth such as We have not established you? And We poured out on them rain from the sky in abundance, and made the rivers flow under them. Yet, We destroyed them for their sins, and We created after them other generations.﴿ *(Qur'an 6: 6)*

Allah destroyed the Persians because of the sins that they had committed, the most serious of which were *kufr* and *shirk*. This verse speaks of an established truth and consistent law: sins destroy those who commit them, and Allah is the One Who destroys the sinners because of their sins.[279] Allah enabled the Muslim ummah to gain power over the Persians when they (the Muslims) fulfilled the

[279] *As-Sunan al-Ilâhiyah*, p. 210.

conditions required for victory and acted in accordance with the laws of Allah.

5.4. Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays changed the course of history

'Umar was adamant that the army should limit itself to the conquest of Persia and he forbade them to penetrate deeply to the east, especially after the defeat of al-Hormuzân and the Muslim conquest of al-Ahwâz.

'Umar said: "The area between the two rivers and al-Ahwâz is sufficient for the people of Baṣra. I wish that between us and the Persians there was a mountain of fire so that they could not reach us and we could not reach them." He said to the people of Koofah: "I wish that between them and the mountain there was a mountain of fire so that they could not reach us and we could not reach them."

'Umar discussed this matter with the delegation, and al-Aḥnaf said to him: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, I was told that you have forbidden us to go any deeper into the land, and you have ordered us to limit ourselves to that which is already in our hands. But the Persian king is still living amongst them and they will keep stirring up trouble for us so long as their king is still among them. No two kings ever meet until one of them expels the other. I think that we did not conquer any land except as a result of their aggression. Their king is the one who is inciting them and he will continue to do so until you give us permission to penetrate their entire country and remove him from his kingdom. Then the Persians will lose hope and will give up."[280]

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[280] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/130.

'Umar said to al-Aḥnaf: "You are right, by Allah, and you have explained the matter to me as it is." So 'Umar gave them permission to penetrate throughout Persia. He came around to al-Aḥnaf's point of view and recognized its merit. So the Muslims penetrated deeply into that land. Al-Aḥnaf was appointed leader of the campaign in Khorasan, and other heroes among the *Mujâhideen* took charge of the campaign in other regions. 'Umar drew up the plan of war for them, and supplied them with reinforcements from the rear.[281]

[281] *Ma'a ar-Ra'eel al-Awwal*, by Muḥibb ad-Deen al-Khaṭeeb, p. 146.

CHAPTER SEVEN
The Conquests of Syria, Egypt and Libya

1. The Conquest of Syria

The first letter to reach Syria from the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb brought news of the death of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (ﷺ) and the appointment of Abu 'Ubaydah as governor of Syria. In this letter it said:

"Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq, the successor of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), has died. Verily to Allah we belong and unto Him is our return. May the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣideeq, the one who acted in accordance with the truth, the enjoiner of good, the gentle, modest, quiet, easy going, friendly and wise. We seek reward with Allah for the calamity of his loss and the calamity that has befallen the Muslims. I ask Allah to protect us by means of piety and His mercy. May He help us to obey Him so long as we live and admit us to Paradise when we die, for He is able to do all things. We have heard that you are besieging Damascus. I have appointed you as commander of the Muslims. Send your raiding parties out towards Homs and Damascus and other parts of Syria, and plan that as you and the Muslims with you see fit. Do not interpret what I say as meaning that you should expose your troops to danger or give the enemy hopes of defeating you, rather send those whom you think you

do not need, and whoever you need with you for the siege, keep them with you. Let one of those whom you keep with you be Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, for you cannot do without him."[1]

When the letter arrived, Abu 'Ubaydah called Mu'âdh ibn Jabal and read the letter to him. The letter-carrier said: "O' Abu 'Ubaydah, 'Umar says to you: "Tell me about Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân and 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ — how are they and how is their conduct? Are they being sincere towards the Muslims?" Abu 'Ubaydah answered 'Umar's envoy and he and Mu'âdh ibn Jabal wrote one letter to 'Umar, in which they said: From Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ and Mu'âdh ibn Jabal to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb:

"Peace be upon you. We praise Allah besides Whom there is no other god. As far as we know, you take care of matters. Now, O' 'Umar, you have become in charge of the affairs of the ummah of Muhammad, the red and the black. There come to you enemies and friends, noble and ignoble, strong and weak, and every one of them has some right of justice over you. So think of how you will handle the matter, O' 'Umar. We remind you of a Day when all the secrets in people's hearts will be revealed and all concealed matters will come to light, and all people will be subjugated to the Sovereign, the Subduer, Who will subdue them by His might; the people will submit themselves, awaiting His judgement, fearing His punishment and hoping for His mercy. We have heard that among this ummah there will be men who are outwardly brothers but inwardly enemies, and we seek refuge with Allah from that. Do not misunderstand our letter or take it in a way other than we intend it. Peace be upon you and the mercy of Allah."[2]

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[1] *Târeekh Dimashq*, 2/125.

[2] *Futooḥ ash-Shâm*, 99-102; *at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 9/274.

Discussion between Khâlid and Abu 'Ubaydah (may Allah be pleased with them both)

Khâlid came to know of the order to dismiss him from command. He went to Abu 'Ubaydah and said: "May Allah forgive you. The letter came from the caliph appointing you in command and you did not tell me; you prayed behind me when you are the one who is in charge." Abu 'Ubaydah said, "May Allah forgive you too. I did not want to tell you that until you had heard it from someone else. I did not want to interrupt your plan until you had completed it, then I would have told you. It is not power in this world that I seek and it is not for worldly gain that I strive. What you see will come to an end and cease to be. We are brothers, carrying out the command of Allah. If a man's brother is appointed over him, it will not harm his spiritual or worldly affairs, rather it is more likely that the one who is in charge is closer to *fitnah* and temptation or more likely to fall into sin, because of what he is exposed to, except those whom Allah protects, of whom there are few." Then Abu 'Ubaydah gave 'Umar's letter to Khâlid.[3]

'Umar (ﷺ) replies to the letter of Abu 'Ubaydah and Mu'âdh

When the letter of Abu 'Ubaydah and Mu'âdh arrived via Shaddâd ibn Aws ibn Thâbit, the nephew of Ḥassân ibn Thâbit al-Anṣâri, 'Umar responded to their letter, saying: "I praise Allah besides Whom there is no other god. I urge you to fear Allah, for that brings the good pleasure of your Lord and is the best that you can gain for yourselves; this is what smart people are eager to attain for themselves whilst helpless people are negligent. Your letter has reached me in which you say that as far as you know, I take care of

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[3] *Târeekh Dimashq*, 2/126.

matters. This is a kind of praise of me. You remind me that I have become in charge of the affairs of this ummah, and that noble and ignoble, enemies and friends, strong and weak, sit before me, and that each of them should have his rightful share of justice. You are asking me how I will handle that. There is no power and no strength except with Allah. You wrote to me telling me to fear a Day that is inevitable; the alternation of night and day wears out everything new and brings near everything that is far and brings about everything that is promised until they bring the Day of Resurrection, the Day on which all the secrets in people's hearts will be revealed and all concealed matters will come to light and all people will be subjugated to the Sovereign, the Subduer, Who will subdue them by His might; the people will submit themselves, awaiting His judgement, fearing His punishment and hoping for His mercy. You say that you have heard that in this ummah there will be men who are outwardly brothers but inwardly enemies. This is not the time for that; that will happen at the end of time, when there will be hope and fear, when people will hope and fear one another. Allah has appointed me in charge of your affairs, and I ask Allah to help me and to protect me from going astray just as He has protected others. I am a Muslim man and a weak slave, except when Allah helps me. The position to which I have been appointed will never change my character *insha' Allâh*. All greatness belongs to Allah and His slaves have nothing to do with it. Let no one among you say that 'Umar has changed since he was appointed caliph. I base my actions on which I see as truth, and I explain my position to you. If any man is in need or has been wronged, I shall restore his rights with no compromise. Your well-being is dear to me and if you get upset with me it will be hard for me to bear. I am responsible for that with which I have been entrusted and I will deal with any situation by myself *insha' Allâh* and not delegate it to anyone else. After that I will not seek help from anyone but those who are trustworthy, those among you who are sincere

towards the people. I will not entrust anything to anyone other than them *insha' Allâh*. As for worldly authority, everything that you see will come to an end. We are brothers, and any one of us may lead his brothers in prayer or may be in charge of him, and that will not affect his spiritual or worldly interests. Rather the one who is in a position of leadership is more likely to fall into temptation or sin, except those whom Allah protects, and they are few."[4]

1.1. The conquest of Damascus

The conquests in Syria during the reign of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) represent the second stage of conquests in this direction, after the conquests at the time of Abu Bakr. After the battle of Yarmook when the Byzantines were defeated, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ appointed Basheer ibn Ka'b al-Ḥimyari in charge of al-Yarmook. He heard that the defeated Byzantines were gathering in Fiḥl and that reinforcements had reached Damascus from Homs. He did not know whether to start with Damascus or Fiḥl which was in Jordan, so the commander Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ wrote to the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ), asking for his orders. 'Umar wrote back: "Start with Damascus and head towards it, for it is the fortress of Syria and the seat of their kingdom. But distract the Byzantines in Fiḥl by sending cavalry to face them and the people of Palestine and Homs. If Allah causes us to conquer it before Damascus, that is what we want, but if its conquest is delayed until Allah enables us to conquer Damascus, then leave some troops to hold the city and take your troops to attack Fiḥl. Once it is conquered, then go with Khâlid to Homs."[5]

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[4] *Futooḥât ash-Shâm*, Pp. 99-102.

[5] *Ad-Da'wah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Ahd Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 276; *Tahdheeb wa Tarteeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 52.

From the commands of 'Umar we may note that he defined the responsibilities of his commanders according to the principle of economy of effort in addition to flexibility with regard to aims and goals. We may also conclude from these orders that the first main goal was Damascus, although a minor force was dispatched to Fiḥl. The second main goal was Fiḥl, as the whole army was sent to conquer it. The third main goal was Homs. In accordance with these instructions, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ sent fighting units to Fiḥl, led by Abu al-A'war as-Sulami 'Âmir ibn Ḥatmah, 'Amr ibn Kulayb, 'Abd 'Umar ibn Yazeed ibn 'Âmir, 'Ammârah ibn aṣ-Ṣa'q ibn Ka'b, Ṣafiy ibn 'Aliyah ibn Shâmil, 'Umar ibn al-Ḥabeeb ibn 'Umar, Labdah ibn 'Âmir, Basheer ibn 'Aṣmah, and 'Amârah ibn Mukhshin, who was the commander of these units, who headed towards Fiḥl.[6]

Abu 'Ubaydah set off towards Damascus, not encountering any significant resistance. The Byzantines relied on the local people in the regions near Damascus to block the advance of the Muslim forces, but they had no real enthusiasm for mounting such a defence, because of the bad treatment that they had received from the Byzantines, especially in the small villages.[7]

The Muslim forces reached the fertile oasis of Damascus (Ghooṭat dimashq) where the palaces and houses of the Byzantines were located, but they found them empty because their inhabitants had abandoned them and fled to Damascus proper. Heraclius sent reinforcements from Homs to Damascus, sending 500 fighters[8], which was a smaller number than was required. The Muslim forces whom Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ had placed to the north of

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[6] *Al-'Amaliyât at-Ta'arruḍiyah ad-Difâ'iyah 'inda al-Muslimeen*, p. 182.

[7] *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah fee al-Futooḥât al-Islâmiyah*, by Dr. Qaṣiy 'Abdur-Ra'oof, p. 188.

[8] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/20; *al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, 188.

Damascus under the leadership of Dhu al-Kilâ' confronted them and a violent battle took place between the two sides, in which the Byzantines were defeated.[9] The people of Damascus asked Heraclius for help, and he sent them a letter urging them to stand firm and to fight and resist, and promising them reinforcements. Thus their resolve was strengthened and they withstood the siege.[10]

1.1.1. The forces on both sides

The Byzantine forces

- Commander in chief: Heraclius
- Governor of Damascus: Nasṭâs ibn Basṭorus
- Commander of the forces in Damascus: Bahân who had taken part in the battle of Yarmook and fled afterwards. His given name was Wardiyân
- The number of Byzantine troops in Damascus was 60,000, with the possibility of an additional 20,000 coming from Homs, and there were 40,000 fighters ready to intervene. The Byzantines stayed in Damascus, making use of its buildings, fortifications and walls, and they may have been expecting reinforcements to come and engage the Muslims from the outside
- The Byzantine forces in Fiḥl were composed of the city guard and the remnants of the army of al-Yarmook whose morale was very low because of their failure in the battle and their having fled therefrom. They were in a state of panic

The Muslim forces

- Commander in chief of the Islamic forces: 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb

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[9] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/20.

[10] *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 188.

❖ Commander of operations in Syria: Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ

❖ The commander Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ sent ten of his generals, led by Abu al-A'war as-Sulami, with an appropriate number of Muslim troops — the sources do not say exactly how many there were — to take control of the road to Damascus as far as Beesân, which is known nowadays as Kharbat Fiḥl[11]

❖ Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ sent other troops, under the leadership of 'Alqamah ibn Ḥakeem and Masrooq, each to a different place in the direction of Palestine, to secure lines of reinforcement from the west and the south[12]

❖ Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ sent a detachment under the leadership of Dhu al-Kilâ' to the north of Damascus, to keep a watch on the road that connected the city to Homs, so as to protect this side and prevent Byzantine reinforcements from reaching Damascus[13]

❖ The size of the Muslim forces after al-Yarmook was 40,000, who were highly organized and whose morale was very high after the victory at al-Yarmook[14]

❖ The size of the Muslim army that lay siege to Damascus was approximately 20,000. The rest of the troops were set to Fiḥl to guard the front there; when necessary they could be withdrawn from Fiḥl to support the siege[15]

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[11] Op. cit., p. 189.

[12] Ibid.

[13] See *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/258; *al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 189.

[14] *Al-Yarmook wa Taḥreer Diyâr ash-Shâm*, by Shâkir Mahmood Râmiz, p. 103.

[15] *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 189.

1.1.2. Description of the city of Damascus

Damascus was a great city that was named after its founder, Dimshâq ibn Kin'ân. It came under Egyptian rule during the Eighteenth Dynasty. It is the oldest city in history and was a centre of idol worship. When Christianity came to the city, they turned its idolatrous temple into a church that was unsurpassed in beauty and splendour, except by the church of Antioch. To the north of Damascus lie the lands of al-Balqa' and to the south al-Joolân (Golan), which is a mountainous region of arable and well-irrigated lands. Damascus was an important commercial centre inhabited by Arabs, and the Muslims knew it well because they used to trade with it. The city of Damascus was a fortified city, surrounded by strong walls built of stone six meters high and three meters wide, with strong gates. Heraclius had increased its fortifications after the Persians conquered it, enabling its gates to be closed firmly and surrounding the walls with a ditch three metres wide into which the waters of the Baradâ river were allowed to flow. Thus Damascus became a fortified citadel which could not easily be breached.[16] This shows us that the Byzantine fortifications of Damascus were very strong. These fortifications indicate the following:

The fortifications of Damascus were not built in haste, because the city was of strategic importance. The Byzantines feared that they may lose it to the Persians, which meant that the efforts of Byzantine military engineers played a role in organizing these defences, utilizing engineering experience and resources that were not needed elsewhere, in addition to the engineering knowledge that was available to the Roman army in this field.

The Byzantine engineering genius manifested itself in the fortifications surrounding the city of Damascus, as the military

[16] Op. cit., p. 180.

engineers took advantage of the topography in building these fortifications, especially utilizing the Baradâ river to fill the ditch surrounding the city, in addition to other ways of using the landscape to make it a natural barrier to block attacks coming from the north and north-east.

The Byzantine leaders placed a great deal of trust in the fortifications of the city, to such an extent that it made them gather their forces and take up a defensive position there, waiting for the Byzantine forces in Homs to regroup and engage the Muslim army. This means that these defences that had been built by the military engineers played a role in forcing the Byzantine commanders to take up this defensive stance, thus they had a direct impact on decision-making. It is very important to understand the importance of military engineering in battle.

On the other hand, these fortifications forced the Muslim army not to attempt to breach the city of Damascus, because they formed an obstacle. So the plan of the Muslim army was to impose a siege on the city.

The historical sources say that the siege of Damascus lasted for seventy days, and it was a harsh siege in which heavy weapons such as catapults and siege engines were used.[17]

1.1.3. The progress of the battle

Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ set out for Damascus, organizing his army in the following fashion:

❖ At the core: Khâlid ibn al-Waleed

❖ On the flanks: 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ and Abu 'Ubaydah

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[17] *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, Pp. 190, 191.

- Cavalry: 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam
- Infantry: Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah

Since the walls of Damascus had gates which were the only means of entering or exiting the city, the Muslims organized their besieging forces as follows:

- At the eastern gate: under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed
- At the gate of al-Jâbiyah: under the leadership of Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ
- At the gate of Tooma: under the leadership of 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ
- At the gate of al-Farâdees: under the leadership of Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah
- At the small gate (*al-bâb aṣ-ṣagheer*): under the leadership of Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân

The Byzantines thought that the Muslims would not be able to keep up such a long siege, especially in winter, but the Muslims were men of deep faith and great patience who were able to withstand the changes in weather. The Muslim leaders let the Muslims take over abandoned churches and houses in the fertile oasis (*al-ghooṭah*) so that the *Mujâhideen* could relax, and they rotated their troops on a weekly basis, whereby troops at the gates would change places with troops in the rear so that the siege could continue no matter how long it took.[18]

But the Muslims did not stop there; they also continued to try to find out more about the enemy and the nature of the fortifications. Thus Khâlid ibn al-Waleed was able to choose sites to breach the fortifications and enter the city of Damascus. He chose the best place

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[18] *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 192.

where there was a lot of water[19] and made rope ladders that could be used by the troops to scale the walls. Khâlid ibn al-Waleed knew that a son had been born to the Patriarch of Damascus and that the people were gathered at the celebratory feast; the Byzantines were preoccupied with eating and drinking and were neglecting their duties, including the task of watching the front and the gates. When evening came, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and his troops set out, led by Khâlid, al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr and Madh'oor ibn 'Adiyy. They said, "When you hear a *takbeer* at the walls, climb up to join us and head for the gate."[20]

Khâlid and his first group crossed the moat in two floating vessels[21] and reached the walls, then they threw up the rope ladders and when they were firmly attached, al-Qa'qâ' and Madh'oor climbed up, then they fixed more ropes. Then the second group came up and the first group went back down and went to the gate, where they joined the soldiers who were with Khâlid. They said the first *takbeer* at the top of the walls, then the second group scaled the walls and headed towards the gate, where they broke in with their swords. Thus the Muslim forces entered the city of Damascus.[22]

Important lessons

Was the conquest achieved by means of a treaty or by force?

The scholars differ as to whether Damascus was conquered by means of a treaty or by force. Most of the scholars are of the view that the matter was settled by means of a peace deal, because they are not sure which came first: was it conquered by force and then the

[19] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/259.

[20] *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 192; *al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/20.

[21] *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, Pp. 192, 193.

[22] Ibid, p. 192.

Byzantines agreed to a peace deal, or was one part conquered by means of a peace deal, then the other side was taken by force? Some suggested that half of it was conquered by means of a peace deal and the other half by force. This is more likely to be the case because what the *Ṣaḥâbah* did in the case of the main church which was the largest place of worship, when they took half of it and left the other half.[23] And Allah knows best.

The date of the conquest

Ibn Katheer said: "The story narrated by Sayf ibn 'Umar suggests that the conquest of Damascus took place in 13 A.H., but Sayf also states the same as the majority, which is that it happened in the middle of Rajab 14 A.H."[24] Khaleefah ibn Khayyât stated that Abu 'Ubadah besieged the Byzantines in Damascus in Rajab, Sha'bân, Ramaḍân and Shawwâl, then the peace treaty came in Dhu al-Qa'dah.[25] What matters is that the conquest took place after the battle of al-Yarmook.[26]

Application of some principles of war

During the conquest of Damascus, the Muslims applied some of the principle of war, including surprise, initiating the fighting, making the most of opportunities and innovative thinking on the part of field commanders. We have seen what Khâlid ibn al-Waleed did when he sent out scouts and looked for the best place to breach the walls, and how that affected the situation and changed the siege into an attack. If we compare what Khâlid ibn al-Waleed did, using rope ladders to climb over the walls of Damascus, with what the Egyptian army did in the October War of 1973 C.E., when they crossed Israel's

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[23] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 56.

[24] Ibid, p. 55.

[25] *Târeekh Kkaleefah*, p. 126.

[26] *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 193.

Bar-Lev line and used rope ladders to reach the enemy's defensive positions, we will realize that it was the same tactic. This demonstrates to us the brilliance of the Muslims during the Islamic conquests, and our modern battles are no more than an extension of this brilliance.[27]

Conquest of other parts of Syria after Damascus

After the conquest of Damascus, Abu 'Ubaydah sent Khâlid ibn al-Waleed to al-Biqâ' (Bekâ)[28], which was conquered by the sword. And he sent out a party which met with the Byzantines in 'Ayn Misnoon. The Byzantines were led by a man called Sinân, who descended upon the Muslims from 'Aqabat Beirut. A number of Muslims were killed that day, so 'Ayn Misnoon became known as 'Ayn ash-Shuhada' (the spring of the martyrs). Abu 'Ubaydah appointed Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân in charge of Damascus during his absence, and Yazeed sent Diḥyah ibn Khaleefah to Tadmur with a detachment of troops to conquer it. He also sent Abu al-Zahra' al-Qushayri to al-Bathaniyah and Ḥawrân, where he made peace treaties with their people. Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah conquered all of Jordan by force, except Ṭabariyah (Tiberias) with whose people he made a peace treaty. Khâlid took over the land of al-Biqâ', and the people of Ba'labak (Bâlbek) asked him for a peace treaty, and he wrote a document for them.

1.2. The battle of Fiḥl

The troops whose job it was to attack the city of Fiḥl headed towards the south. When they drew near to the city, the Byzantine

[27] *Al-Handasah al-'Askariyah*, p. 195.

[28] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, Pp. 58, 59; see also *al-'Amaliyat at-Ta'arruḍiyah wa ad-Difâ'iyah 'inda al-Muslimeen*, p. 185.

forces numbered nearly one hundred thousand, most of whom had come from Homs and were joined by troops from other cities that had been defeated in previous battles. When the Muslim troops who were to besiege Fiḥl under the leadership of 'Ammâr ibn Mukhshin reached the city, they were confronted by the Byzantines who dug ditches from Lake Tiberias and directed the water to the areas surrounding Fiḥl with the aim of blocking the Muslim army, especially the cavalry. This is a tactic that is used nowadays against armoured vehicles. Thus the Muslim cavalry was blocked, and the Byzantines turned this mud into a defensive line that protected Fiḥl even though it is located on a flat plain. If this plain had been dry, the Muslims would have been able to attack the city easily, for they were the most able of people in fighting desert battles. 'Amârah ibn Mukhshin stopped and ordered his troops to besiege Fiḥl instead of attacking it, due to the big difference in numbers between the forces and the difficulty of attacking, as well as the inability to cross the water barrier that the Byzantines had created. So the Muslims limited themselves to imposing a siege on the city of Fiḥl in which the Byzantines were barricaded, until Abu 'Ubaydah had completed the conquest of the capital Damascus and was able to bring his army to join the army of Abu al-A'war as-Sulami, whereupon Abu 'Ubaydah reorganized his troops in the following manner:

- The vanguard under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed
- The right flank under the leadership of Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ
- The left flank under the leadership of 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ
- The cavalry under the leadership of Ḍirâr ibn al-Azoor
- The infantry under the leadership of 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam
- General command of the troops went to Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah, because the site of the battle was in the area that was under his

command. Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah took command then he organized the troops and supply lines, and set out a plan to keep them in an ongoing state of readiness, prepared to face emergencies at any moment of day or night.[29]

The Muslim siege of Fiḥl lasted for a long time, and the Byzantines thought that they would be able to take the Muslims by surprise and launch a decisive attack on them by night. The Byzantines, led by Saqlâb ibn Mikhrâq, attacked the Muslims who rose up against them as one, because they were in a constant state of complete readiness. The battle lasted until daybreak and then went on all day, until night fell. When it grew dark, the Byzantines fled and their leader was killed. The Muslims set out in pursuit and drove them in their defeat to that muddy area that they had prepared for the Muslims. For the attacking Byzantine army, chaos ensued, as the defeated troops fell into the water barrier that they themselves had made around Fiḥl. The Muslims pursued them and none of them escaped except a few. The Byzantine force that had been besieged was utterly destroyed, after which the Muslims continued with their original plan, according to which they sent Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah to Jordan and 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ to Palestine.

Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ and Khâlid ibn al-Waleed set off for Homs, and when they reached Marj ar-Room there was a bloody battle in which the plain was strewn with the bodies of the slain. During this battle, the Muslims managed to apply an important principle of warfare when the Byzantine vanguard engaged the Muslim vanguard. When Toodhra realized that the vanguard of his army had engaged the Muslim army, he turned around and headed towards Damascus. When the Muslims realized what was happening, they studied the situation and Abu 'Ubaydah decided to send a force,

[29] *Al-'Amaliyât at-Ta'arrudiyah wa ad-Difâ'iyah 'inda al-Muslimeen*, p. 188.

under the leadership of Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, to chase Toodhra and attack him from behind, whilst Abu 'Ubaydah stayed where he was, fighting the Byzantine troops. At the same time, the Muslim scouts managed to find out the direction in which Toodhra was heading, so the troops of Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân intercepted him. As soon as the fighting started between Toodhra and the troops of Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân, Khâlid ibn al-Waleed launched a surprise attack on the Byzantines from behind, and the forces of Toodhra were utterly destroyed.[30]

1.3. The conquest of Baysân and Ṭabariyah

Abu 'Ubaydah and Khâlid, along with their troops, set off towards Homs as ordered by the caliph 'Umar, and Abu 'Ubaydah left Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah in charge of Jordan. Shuraḥbeel, accompanied by 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, went and lay siege to Baysân, where the people came out to fight him and he killed a large number of them, then they made a peace deal with him on the same terms as Damascus. He imposed the *jizyah* on them and the *kharâj* on their lands. Abu al-A'war as-Sulami did likewise with the people of Ṭabariyah.[31]

1.4. The battle of Homs, 15 A.H.

Abu 'Ubaydah continued pursuing the fleeing Byzantines as far as Homs, where he lay siege to the city. He was joined by Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and they intensified the siege, at a time of intense cold. The people of the city bore it patiently, hoping that the Muslims

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[30] *Al-'Amaliyât at-Ta'arrudiyah wa ad-Difâ'iyah 'inda al-Muslimeen*, 189.

[31] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 61.

would go away because of the intense cold, but the *Ṣaḥâbah* exhibited a great deal of patience. More than one commentator stated that among the Byzantines were those whose feet fell off in their leather boots, whilst the *Ṣaḥâbah* wore nothing on their feet but sandals, but no harm came to their feet or their toes. Some of the elders of Homs suggested that they should make a peace deal, but the people refused, saying, our king is nearby. It is said that one day the *Ṣaḥâbah* said a *takbeer* that shook the city, and there was an earthquake that cracked some of the walls. Then they said another *takbeer* and some of the houses collapsed. The common folk came to their leaders and said, "Do you not see what has befallen us and the situation we are in? Why don't you make a deal with these people on our behalf?" So they made a peace deal on the same terms as Damascus, on the basis that they would give (to the Muslims) half of the houses, and the *kharâj* would be paid on the land and the *jizyah* would be taken from individuals, according to their means. Abu 'Ubaydah sent the *khums* and the good news of the conquest to 'Umar with 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood, and Abu 'Ubaydah stayed in Homs with a huge army, along with a number of leaders such as Bilâl and al-Miqdâd. Abu 'Ubaydah wrote to 'Umar telling him that Heraclius had stopped the flow of water[32] to al-Jazeerah, and that the water appeared sometimes and disappeared sometimes. 'Umar sent word to him telling him to stay where he was.[33]

1.5. The battle of Qinnasreen 15 A.H.

Abu 'Ubaydah sent Khâlid ibn al-Waleed to Qinnasreen[34], and when he reached it, its people and the Christian Arabs who were with

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[32] i.e., he had blocked the Euphrates to prevent it reaching al-Jazeerah.

[33] *Tarteeb al-Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 62.

[34] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/427.

them revolted against him. Khâlid fought them in an intense battle, and killed many of them. As for the Byzantines who were there, he utterly destroyed them and killed their leader Minâs. The Bedouin there apologized to him, saying that this fighting was not their idea; Khâlid accepted their apology and left them alone. Then he headed towards the city where they had barricaded themselves and Khâlid said to them: "Even if you were in the clouds, Allah would lift us up to you or bring you down to us." And he kept besieging them until Allah granted him victory. When 'Umar heard of what Khâlid had done in this battle, he said, "May Allah have mercy on Abu Bakr, for he had more knowledge of men than me. By Allah, I am not dismissing him because of suspicion, rather I fear that the people will come to depend on him."[35]

1.6. The battle of Caesarea 15 A.H.

During the same year, 'Umar appointed Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân in charge of Caesarea[36], and wrote to him saying: "I have appointed you in charge of Caesarea; go there and seek the help of Allah against them, and say a great deal, '*Lâ hawla wa lâ quwwata illa Billâh il-'Aliy il-'Adheem* — there is no power and no strength except with Allah, the Most High, the Almighty.' Allah is our Lord, our trust, our hope and our Helper, and He is the best of helpers and the best of supporters." So he went there and besieged the city, and its people came out to fight on numerous occasions, the last of which was a battle in which they fought intensely and Mu'âwiyah strove hard against them, until Allah granted him victory over them. The fighting did not end until nearly eighty thousand of them had been killed, and the number was brought up to one hundred thousand with

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[35] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 63.

[36] *Târeekh at-Tabari*, 4/431.

those who fled from the battle. Mu'âwiyah sent news of the victory and the *khums* to the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ).[37]

Dr. 'Abdur-Raḥmân ash-Shujâ' thinks that the cities of Syria fell to the *Mujâhideen* one after another because the Byzantines were so low in morale that they never thought of resisting. So the cities of Beirut, Sidon, Nablus, Lod, Aleppo, and Antioch all fell. Caesarea was the last of the cities of Syria to be conquered at the hands of Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân, and that took place after the conquest of Jerusalem.[38]

1.7. The conquest of Jerusalem 16 A.H.

There was a Byzantine leader in charge of Palestine who was called the Arṭaboon, i.e., the senior commander who was second in command to the Emperor. This man was the craftiest and most brilliant of the Byzantines, with the deepest insight and the most treacherous nature. He had put a large number of troops in Ramlah and Aeelia' (Jerusalem)[39], and 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ wrote to 'Umar informing him of that and asking him for advice and instructions. 'Umar said his famous words: "We have sent against the Arṭaboon of the Byzantines the Arṭaboon of the Arabs. Let us see how things will work out."[40] And he meant it, for both leaders were the smartest among their people. The second battle of Ajnâdayn in 15 A.H., in which 'Amr defeated the Byzantines, paved the way to Palestine.[41] The battle of Jerusalem began before the second battle of Ajnâdayn

[37] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, Pp. 63, 64.

[38] *Dirâsât fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwa wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 355.

[39] *Ḥuroob al-Quds fee at-Târeekh al-Islâmi wa al-'Arabi*, by Dr. Yaseen Suwayd, p. 35.

[40] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/431.

[41] *Ḥuroob al-Quds fee at-Târeekh al-Islâmi wa al-'Arabi*, p. 35.

when the Arṭaboon of the Byzantines sent a large number of troops to both Aeelia' and ar-Ramlah, as we stated above, in case of any attack by the Muslims under the leadership of 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ on these two cities, which were the most important cities in Palestine; ar-Ramlah was the capital of Palestine, and Aeelia' was its largest city and between the two there was a distance of eighteen miles.[42] The Byzantines in Aeelia' were governed by the Arṭaboon himself, who had fled there with the remnants of his army after the defeat at Ajnâdayn. Their governor in ar-Ramlah was at-Tadhâriq.[43] These are the most important stages in the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem:

1.7.1. Distracting the enemy

The plan of the caliph 'Umar was to distract the Byzantines from 'Amr in Palestine until victory was achieved against their troops in Ajnâdayn, so that after that the Muslims could concentrate on conquering Jerusalem and the rest of Syria. He ordered Mu'âwiyah to go with his cavalry to Caesarea, to distract its garrison from 'Amr. 'Amr himself followed a plan that was similar to the caliph's plan. He sent 'Alqamah ibn Ḥakeem al-Firâsi and Masrooq ibn Fulân al-Makki at the head of a detachment to distract the Byzantine garrison in Aeelia'; they went to Aeelia' and distracted the troops there from 'Amr.[44] Then he sent Abu Ayyoob al-Mâliki at the head of another detachment to distract the Byzantine garrison in ar-Ramlah. As soon as reinforcements reached 'Amr, he sent Muhammad ibn 'Amr with reinforcements to the troops who were confronting the garrison of Aeelia', and he sent 'Ammârah ibn 'Amr ibn Umayyah aḍ-Ḍumari with reinforcements to the troops who were confronting the garrison of ar-Ramlah. He himself stayed in Ajnâdayn, awaiting the decisive

[42] Op. cit., Pp. 35, 36.

[43] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/432.

[44] *Ḥuroob al-Quds*, p. 36.

battle with Arṭaboon. In the meantime, the garrison of Aeelia' was trying to ward off the Muslims from the city walls, and the fighting intensified around the holy city, whilst the Muslims and Byzantines were mobilizing to fight in Ajnâdayn. The battle of Ajnâdayn was intense[45], and aṭ-Ṭabari says concerning it: "They — the Muslims and the Byzantines — fought a battle that was as fierce as the battle of al-Yarmook, until many of them were killed.[46] It was a showdown between the Arṭaboon of the Arabs and the Arṭaboon of the Byzantines in Ajnâdayn. The Roman general was defeated and fled with his troops to seek protection within the walls of the holy city, and the Muslims gave them time to enter the city."[47] Aṭ-Ṭabari states that 'Alqamah, Masrooq, Muhammad ibn 'Amr and Abu Ayyoob all joined 'Amr in Ajnâdayn, and 'Amr marched with his entire army to Aeelia' to lay siege to it.[48]

The Muslims gathered, under the leadership of 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, around Aeelia', and 'Amr lay siege to the city. The city was well fortified, and al-Wâqidi describes the walls of the city as being fortified with catapults, swords, shields, and chain mail. He states that the fighting began after a three-day siege, when the Muslims advanced towards the walls of the city and the garrison rained down arrows upon them, from which they protected themselves with their shields. The fighting lasted from morning until sunset, and continued in this manner for a number of days. Then on the eleventh day, Abu 'Ubaydah came to the Muslims, accompanied by Khâlid and 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn Abi Bakr, and the Muslim cavalry and the champions of the people of *Tawḥeed*[49] which caused panic in the people of Aeelia'.

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[45] Op. cit., p. 36.

[46] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/433.

[47] Ibid.

[48] *Ḥuroob al-Quds*, p. 37.

[49] Ibid, p. 38.

The siege went on for four months, and there was no day on which fierce fighting did not take place. The Muslims bore the cold, snow and rain with patience[50], until the Byzantines despaired of resisting the Muslim siege of their city. The Patriarch Sophronius decided to stage a final attempt, and wrote a letter to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, the commander of the Muslim army, urging him to lift the siege because it was impossible for him to occupy the city.[51]

1.7.2. Surrender

The Byzantine Arṭaboon wrote to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ saying: "You are my friend and my counterpart; your position among your people is like my position among my people. By Allah, you will not conquer any part of Palestine after Ajnâdayn, so go back and do not be deceived, lest you be defeated like those who came before you."[52] 'Amr wrote back to him, saying: "I am the one who is going to conquer this land." He sent the letter with a messenger and ordered him to tell him of the response of Arṭaboon. When Arṭaboon read the letter of 'Amr he laughed at what was written in it and said, "The one who is going to conquer *Bayt al-Maqdis* is a man called 'Umar." The messenger told 'Amr what he had heard from Arṭaboon, and 'Amr knew that the man whom Arṭaboon had mentioned was the caliph.[53] He wrote to the caliph telling him what al-Arṭaboon had said, that no one would conquer the city but him, and asking him for advice, saying, "I am dealing with a very difficult situation and this land has been saved for you to deal with, so what do you think?"[54] After consulting others, the caliph set out for Syria with reinforcements,

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[50] Op. cit., p. 38.

[51] Ibid.

[52] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/433.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

after appointing 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib (ﷺ) in charge of Madeenah in his absence. He camped at al-Jâbiyah, where the people of Aeelia' came to him and made a treaty with him on the basis that they would pay the *jizyah*, and they opened the city to him.[55]

1.7.3. Different reports concerning who besieged Jerusalem and examination thereof

Aṭ-Ṭabari narrated more than one report concerning the siege of Jerusalem which say that the one who besieged it was 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ. Another report says that the reason why 'Umar came to Syria was that Abu 'Ubaydah was besieging Jerusalem and its people asked him to make a peace deal with them along the same lines as the peace deals with other cities of Syria, and that the one who drew up the treaty should be 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. So he wrote to 'Umar, telling him about that, and he came from Madeenah after appointing 'Ali in charge of it in his absence, bringing reinforcements for the troops in Syria.

Ibn al-Atheer narrated two reports that were very similar to the reports narrated by aṭ-Ṭabari.[56] Al-Wâqidi attributed the siege of Jerusalem, including the consultation with the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ) and the negotiation with the Byzantine garrison, to Abu 'Ubaydah. He states that Abu 'Ubaydah sent thirty-five thousand warriors to *Bayt al-Maqdis* under the leadership of seven commanders, each commander leading five thousand men. They were: Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân, Shuraḥbeel ibn Ḥasanah, al-Mirqâl ibn Hâshim ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, al-Musayyib ibn Najiyah al-Fazâri, Qays ibn Hubayrah al-Murâdi and 'Urwah ibn al-Muhallal ibn Yazeed. He sent them on seven consecutive days, one commander

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[55] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/434.

[56] *Ḥuroob al-Quds*, p. 40.

per day, then he joined them a few days after fighting broke out between them and the garrison of the city.[57] Al-Wâqidi went further than that and said that the people of Aeelia' came to Abu 'Ubaydah offering to let him enter the city peacefully, on condition that the treaty be done by the caliph of the Muslims, 'Umar, then he mentioned a report that is similar to the report narrated by aṭ-Ṭabari and Ibn al-Atheer, adding that Abu 'Ubaydah wrote to the caliph telling him what had happened. The caliph came to *Bayt al-Maqdis* and camped by the city walls, and the Patriarch came out to meet him, and said: "By Allah, this is the one whose description we find in our books, the one at whose hands our land will be conquered."[58] Then he went back to his people and told them, and they came rushing out, having suffered greatly during the siege, and opened the gate. They came out to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and asked him for a peace treaty and protection, and agreeing to pay the *jizyah* to him.[59] We regard this report of al-Wâqidi's as unlikely to be true, because we believe that whilst 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ was besieging Jerusalem, his fellow Muslim commanders, after al-Yarmook, Damascus and Fiḥl, were travelling all over Syria, achieving victories. Abu 'Ubaydah, accompanied by Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, conquered Homs, Ḥama, Qinnasreen and Aleppo, then he followed the coastal route south and took control of Antioch, Latakia and 'Arqah. Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân seized control of the coastal route from Beirut to Sidon, and north from 'Asqallân to Tyre.[60] But al-Balâdhuri notes in a report that 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ is the one who besieged Jerusalem after the conquest of Rafaḥ, and that Abu 'Ubaydah came and joined him after conquering Qinnasreen and its environs, in 16 A.H. He was the one who besieged

[57] *Futooḥ ash-Shâm*, 1/213-216.

[58] Ibid, 1/225.

[59] *Ḥuroob al-Quds*, p. 40.

[60] Ibid, p. 41.

Aeelia', and Aeelia' is the city of *Bayt al-Maqdis* (i.e., Jerusalem).[61] The people of Aeelia' asked Abu 'Ubaydah for safety and a peace deal along the same lines as the peace deals with other cities of Syria, on condition that the peace deal with made with 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb himself. Abu 'Ubaydah wrote to the caliph telling him of that, and 'Umar came and camped in al-Jâbiyah, near Damascus, then travelled to Aeelia', where he entered into a peace deal with its people. The conquest of Aeelia' took place in 17 A.H. Al-Balâdhuri then adds that there was another report concerning the conquest of Aeelia'[62], but we believe the first report which was narrated by aṭ-Ṭabari to be more likely. This report says that the siege of Jerusalem was carried out by 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, and not by Abu 'Ubaydah. We think that it is not unlikely that Abu 'Ubaydah joined the caliph 'Umar in al-Jâbiyah for consultations concerning the conquest, seeing that he was the commander in chief of the Muslim armies in Syria, especially since we know that Abu 'Ubaydah was the second one, after Yazeed, to meet the caliph when he arrived in al-Jâbiyah and summoned all the commanders of the troops in Syria[63] for a consultation. Abu 'Ubaydah was present, along with Yazeed, Shuraḥbeel and the senior Muslim commanders in Syria, and the treaty and guarantee of safety was drawn up, and the city was handed over.[64] But Abu 'Ubaydah did not witness this treaty as 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf, Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân and Khâlid ibn al-Waleed did, as is indicated by the text of the document itself, and we have no other explanation for that than the fact that Abu 'Ubaydah was not the commander of the army that besieged the city, rather the commander was 'Amr.[65]

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[61] *Futooḥ al-Buldân*, 1/188-189.

[62] Ibid, 1/189.

[63] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/431-436.

[64] *Ḥuroob al-Quds*, p. 41.

[65] Ibid, p. 42.

1.7.4. The text of the document

There follows the text of the treaty as it was narrated by aṭ-Ṭabari:

"In the name of Allah the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, This is what the servant of Allah, 'Umar, the *Ameer al-Mu'mineen,* has granted to the people of Aeelia' of security: He has granted them security for themselves, their possessions, their churches and crosses, their sick and healthy and all their co-religionists. Their churches shall not be taken for residence and shall not be demolished, nothing shall be damaged from them or from their surroundings, nor shall their crosses be removed or anything taken from their property. They shall not be harassed because of their religion, and none of them shall be harmed. No Jew will be allowed to live with them in Aeelia'.

The people of Aeelia' will have to pay *Jizyah* as the inhabitants of other cities pay. They have to expel from Aeelia' the Byzantines and thieves. Those of them who leave shall have security for themselves and their belongings until they reach a place of safety, but anyone from among them who wants to stay in Aeelia' shall be safe provided they pay the *Jizyah* like the people of Aeelia'.

If any of the people of Aeelia' want to leave with the Byzantines and take their belongings with them, they and their churches and crosses shall be safe until they reach a place of safety. Any of the people of the land who were in Aeelia' before the slaying of its last leader shall have the option of either staying, provided they pay the *jizyah* like the people of Aeelia' or if they so wish, they will be allowed to leave with the Byzantines or go back to their original homes. No *jizyah* will be collected from them until they are able to pay it.

The promise of Allah, may He be exalted, His Messenger (ﷺ), the *Khaleefah*, and the believers is therefore given to abide by the terms of this treaty as long as the people pay the *jizyah*.

Witnessed by: Khâlid ibn al-Waleed, 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf, and Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân. Written in the year 15 A.H."[66]

Important lessons

The sacrificial attitude of Wâthilah ibn al-Asqa' (ﷺ)

Wâthilah said: "... I heard the squeaking of the gate of al-Jâbiyah, which was one of the gates of Damascus, so I waited, then I saw a huge cavalry. I waited for awhile, then I rushed at them, saying *takbeer*, and they thought that they were surrounded, so they fled back to the city, abandoning their leader. I ran him through and threw him from his nag, then I grabbed the reins of the nag and ran. They turned around and when they saw that I was alone, they followed me. I ran a horseman through with my spear and killed him, then another came close and I killed him too. Then I came to Khâlid ibn al-Waleed and told him, and there was a leader of the Byzantines with him, seeking safety for the people of Damascus.[67]

The mission of Mu'âdh ibn Jabal to the Byzantines just before the battle of Fiḥl

After skirmishes between the Muslims and the Byzantines, just before the battle of Fiḥl, the Byzantines sent word to the Muslims asking them to send a man to them, "So that we may ask him what you want and are asking for and calling to, and we may tell him what we want." So Abu 'Ubaydah sent Mu'âdh ibn Jabal al-Anṣâri to them as an envoy, to negotiate on behalf of the Muslims. The Byzantines prepared to welcome him, bringing out their most beautiful adornments and most lethal weapons. They spread the most

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66 *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/436.

67 *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/386-387; *at-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 10/319.

costly and dazzling carpets and cushions on the ground, to distract Mu'âdh from what he had come for, or to terrify and discourage him. But he surprised them with his disdain for their adornments and his refusal of all kinds of temptation, and with his humility and asceticism. Indeed, he took advantage of the situation and used it as a weapon against the Byzantines. He held on to the reins of his horse and refused to hand them to the Byzantine slave. He also refused to sit in the place that the Byzantines had prepared for him, saying, "I will not sit on these cushions that you enjoy at the expense of your weak ones." He sat on the ground and said, "I am one of the slaves of Allah and I sit on the ground of Allah. I will not enjoy anything of the wealth of Allah to the exclusion of my brothers."[68]

A discussion took place between them, in which they asked him about Islam and he answered them. They asked him about the Prophet of Allah 'Eesa (ﷺ) and he recited to them the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴾Verily, the likeness of 'Eesa [Jesus] before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then [He] said to him, 'Be!' — and he was.﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 59)*

He explained to them what the Muslims wanted from them, and he recited to them the verse:

﴾O' you who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are close to you, and let them find harshness in you...﴿ *(Qur'an 9: 123)*

They told him that the reason why the Muslims had been victorious over the Persians was the death of their king, (and said): "The king of the Byzantines is alive and his troops are innumerable." He said to them, "Your king is Heraclius but our King is Allah, and our commander is a man from among us. If he treats us in accordance

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[68] *Al-Iktifa'* by al-Kalâ'i, 3/194.

with the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of our Prophet, we will approve of him, but if he does otherwise, we will dismiss him. He does not isolate himself from us and he is not arrogant and does not act superior to us."[69] As for their large numbers, he responded by reciting to them the verse:

﴾... How often a small group overcame a mighty host by Allah's Leave? And Allah is with *aṣ-Ṣâbiroon* [the patient].﴿ *(Qur'an 2: 249)*

When the Byzantines failed to influence Mu'âdh or undermine his confidence with the adornments and show that they had prepared, they came back to reality and offered him a peace deal, whereby they would give al-Balqâ' and its environs to the Muslims. Mu'âdh informed them that he was not the Muslim leader, and that their options were either to become Muslim or to pay the *jizyah* or to fight. They got angry and said, "Go back to your companions, and we hope that soon we will capture you and put you in chains." Mu'âdh said, "No way. By Allah you will have to kill us all, or we shall chase you out, humiliated." Then he went away.[70] During this mission, Mu'âdh exhibited a military and political character, calling the people to Islam and refuting the arguments of his opponents, exposing their faults and their arrogant treatment of their own people, reminding them of the teachings of their own religion and calling them to Islam. As for their exaggerations and attempts at psychological warfare, he repelled them by referring to reality, with no exaggeration or scare-mongering. Then he went back to his leaders, who approved of everything that he had done and said to the Byzantines.[71] The Muslims always called their opponents to Islam before the fighting began.

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[69] *Al-Iktifa'* by al-Kalâ'i, 3/194.

[70] Ibid.

[71] *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 207.

The attitude of 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit during the conquest of Caesarea

'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit was on the right flank of the Muslim army during the siege of Caesarea. He exhorted his troops and called on them to check on themselves and beware of sin. Then he led an attack in which many of the Byzantines were killed, but he did not manage to achieve his goal. He went back to the place from which he had set out and urged his companions to fight, expressing his astonishment that he had not managed to achieve the aims of this attack. He said: "O' people of Islam, I was one of the youngest of those who came to give the oath of allegiance, and I have been one of the longest-lived. Allah has decreed that I should remain alive until I fight this enemy with you... By the One in Whose hand is my soul, I have never launched an attack with a group of believers against a group of *mushrikeen* but they fled from us and Allah caused us to prevail. What is wrong with you that you attacked these people but did not cause them to flee?"[72] Then he explained to them what he feared for them and said, "By Allah, I fear two things for you: that you may have stolen from the war booty, and that you may not have been sincere towards Allah when you attacked them."[73] He urged his companions to seek martyrdom sincerely, and told them that he would be in the forefront and would never return to his place, until Allah granted him victory or blessed him with martyrdom.[74] When the Muslims and Byzantines met, 'Ubâdah dismounted and started marching towards the enemy. When 'Umayr ibn Sa'd al-Anṣâri saw him, he called the Muslims and told them what their leader had done, and urged them to follow his example. Then they fought the

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[72] Op. cit, p. 209.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

Byzantines until they defeated them and made them flee to their fortress.[75]

Umm Ḥakeem bint al-Ḥârith ibn Hishâm in the battle of Marj aṣ-Ṣufr

Umm Ḥakeem bint al-Ḥârith ibn Hishâm was married to 'Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl, who was killed during one of the battles of Syria.[76] She observed the *'iddah* of four months and ten days, then Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân proposed to her, but Khâlid ibn Sa'eed had sent word to her hinting at marriage. She got engaged to Khâlid ibn Sa'eed, and he married her. When the Muslims camped in Marj aṣ-Ṣufr — and Khâlid had been present at Ajnâdayn, Fiḥl and Marj aṣ-Ṣafr — he wanted to spend the wedding night with Umm Ḥakeem. She said, "Why don't you delay it until this battle is over?" but Khâlid said: "I have a feeling that I will be killed." She said, "It is up to you." So he spent the wedding night with her at the bridge in aṣ-Ṣafr, hence the bridge became known as the Bridge of Umm Ḥakeem. And he gave a wedding feast for her and invited his companions to come and eat. When they had finished eating, the Byzantines drew up ranks and Khâlid ibn Sa'eed went out for single combat and was killed. Umm Ḥakeem tied up her garments and went out, ready to fight, still with traces of perfume on her. They fought a fierce battle at the river, and both sides endured with patience, exchanging blows with their swords. On that day, Umm Ḥakeem killed seven men with the pole of the tent in which she had spent her wedding night with Khâlid.[77]

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[75] Op. cit., p. 209.

[76] It was said that he was martyred at al-Yarmook, or at Ajnâdayn, or at Fiḥl.

[77] *Al-Istee'âb*, 4/486; *Dawr al-Mar'ah as-Siyâsi* by Asmâ' Muhammad, p. 313.

Caesar the king of the Byzantines bids farewell to Syria

In 15 A.H. (or it was said, in 16 A.H.[78] Heraclius retreated with his troops, leaving Syria and heading for Byzantium.[79] Every time Heraclius came on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and left it, he would say, "Farewell, O' Syria, I bid you farewell but I still have not had my fill of you and I shall return." But when he decided to flee from Syria and reached ar-Ruha[80], he asked its people to accompany him to Byzantium and they said, "If we stay here it will be better for you than if we go with you." So he left them and when he reached Shimshâṭ[81], he climbed up onto high ground there, turned towards Jerusalem and said: "Farewell, O' Syria, after which we will never meet again."[82] Then Heraclius went and settled in Constantinople. He asked one of his followers, who had been held captive by the Muslims, "Tell me about these people." He said, "I shall tell you so that it is as if you can see them. They are knights by day and monks by night. They do not take anything unlawfully, they do not enter a place except by giving the greeting of *salâm*, and they destroy utterly anyone who fights them." Heraclius said, "If what you are telling me is true, then will take control of the land that is beneath my feet."[83]

Allah has honoured you with Islam

When 'Umar (ﷺ) came to Syria, riding on his donkey with his feet dangling on one side, Abu 'Ubaydah said to him: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, now you are going to meet the leaders of the people."

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[78] *Tarteeb wa Tahdheeb al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, p. 66.

[79] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/428.

[80] A city in al-Jazeerah between Moṣul and Syria.

[81] A city on the banks of the Euphrates on the Armenian side, between Armenia and Syria.

[82] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/429.

[83] Ibid.

'Umar (ﷺ) said: "Allah has honoured you with Islam; to the extent that you seek honour elsewhere, you will be humiliated."[84]

His speech in al-Jâbiyah when he arrived in Syria

'Umar gave a speech in al-Jâbiyah and said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stood as I am standing now and said, 'Be kind to my Companions, then those who come after them, then those who come after them. Then there will come people who will swear an oath before being asked to do so, and will give testimony before being asked to do so. Whoever among you would like to attain the centre of Paradise, let him adhere to the *jamâ'ah* (the main body of Muslims), for the *Shayṭân* is with one, but he is further away from two. No man is alone with a woman but the *Shayṭân* is the third one present. Whoever among you feels happy when he does a good deed and feels bad when he does a bad deed is a believer.'"[85]

This world has changed us all except you, O' Abu 'Ubaydah

When 'Umar (ﷺ) came to Syria, he said to Abu 'Ubaydah (ﷺ): "Let us go to your house." He said, "What will you do at my house? All you will do is weep for me!" He entered the house and did not see anything. He said, "Where is your furniture? I do not see anything but a saddle, a plate and a waterskin, and you are the governor! Do you have any food?" Abu 'Ubaydah went to a basket and took out some pieces of bread. 'Umar wept and Abu 'Ubaydah said to him, "I told you that you would weep for me, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. Whatever gets you to your destination is enough." 'Umar said, "This world has changed us all except you, O' Abu 'Ubaydah."[86] Adh-Dhahabi commented on this incident, saying:

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[84] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/590; its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[85] *Musnad Aḥmad, al-Mawsoo'ah al-Ḥadeethiyah*, no. 177; a *ṣaḥeeḥ* hadith the men of whose isnad are *thiqât*.

[86] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 1/17.

"This, by Allah, is true asceticism; it is not the asceticism of one who is utterly destitute."[87]

According to a report narrated from Hishâm ibn 'Urwah, his father said: " 'Umar came to Syria, and was met by the commanders of the troops and the leaders of the local people. 'Umar asked, "Where is my brother?" They said, "Who?" He said, "Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ." They said, "He is coming now." He came on a camel and greeted him with *salâm*, then he said to the people, "Leave us alone." He walked with him until he came to his house, then he stayed with him, and he did not see anything in his house except his sword, shield and saddle.[88]

Comments on the treaty with the people of Jerusalem

The treaty document which was drawn up by 'Umar (ﷺ) bears true testimony to the fact that Islam is a religion of tolerance and not a religion of compulsion. It bears testimony that the Muslims treated the Christians in Jerusalem in a manner that had not even crossed their minds. 'Umar — who was the conqueror — could have imposed on them whatever he wanted and forced them to do whatever he wanted, but he did not do that, because he was representing Islam, and Islam does not force anyone to enter it, and it does not accept faith from anyone unless they believe voluntarily and in submission to Allah, for faith is not something that can be forced on people, because it is an action of the heart, and no one knows the innermost secrets of the heart except Allah, may He be glorified. A person may appear to you outwardly to be a believer when that is not the case, and such a person may cause more harm to the believers than those who outwardly show their disbelief and atheism. Hence the Muslims prefer to give people freedom of worship, and guarantee

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[87] Op. cit., 1/17.

[88] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 2/589, 590, its isnad is *ṣaheeḥ* as far as 'Urwah.

the safety of everything that is dear to them, so that they may live under the protection of the Muslims, paying the *jizyah* in return for that protection. In the shade of this peaceful and quiet life, living together under the protection and justice of the Muslims, the non-Muslims will see at close hand the beauty, tolerance, fairness and justice of Islam, and will see the truths that had been hidden from them because they were far away from it. At that point they will enter the religion of Allah in crowds, as happened in every land which was conquered by the Muslims, where they granted safety to the people.[89]

'Umar prays in al-Masjid al-Aqsa

Abu Salamah said: Abu Sinân told me that 'Ubayd ibn Adam said: "I heard 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb say to Ka'b, 'Where do you think I should pray?' He said, 'If I were you, I would pray behind the Rock, then all of Jerusalem will be before you.' 'Umar said, 'This is like the Jewish way. No, I will pray where the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) prayed.' So he went forward towards the *qiblah* and prayed. Then he came and spread his cloak and cleared away the garbage with his cloak, and the people did likewise.[90]

Ibn Taymiyah said: "*Al-Masjid al-Aqsa* is the name of the entire mosque. Some people have started to use the name *al-Aqsa* for the prayer-place which was built by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb at the front. Praying in this place that 'Umar built is better than praying anywhere else in the rest of the mosque. When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb conquered Jerusalem, there was a huge garbage dump on the rock, because the Christians used to deliberately treat it in a disrespectful manner, to annoy the Jews who used to pray in that direction. 'Umar issued orders that the filth be removed, and said to Ka'b, "Where do

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[89] *Jawlah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen* by Muhammad Sayyid al-Wakeel, Pp. 200, 201.

[90] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/57, this isnad is *jayyid*.

you think we should build the prayer-place of the Muslims?" He said, "Behind the Rock." 'Umar said, "O' son of a Jewish woman, you are influenced by the Jews! Rather I shall build it at the front, for the front part of the mosque is ours."[91]

This is another example of the brilliant attitude of 'Umar, which proves in a practical way that Islam respects all the divinely-revealed religions and respects all the holy places, without exception. This Rock, from which 'Umar removed the dirt and filth with his own hands and carried it away in his cloak to cleanse it, was the *qiblah* (direction of prayer) of the Jews, and the Rock which was venerated by them because it was where God had spoken to Jacob — according to their beliefs. Similarly 'Umar adopted a brilliant attitude towards the Christians when he allowed them freedom of belief and guaranteed safety for their crosses and churches. He did not withhold this attitude from the Jews either, despite the crimes that they had committed against the Muslims, as he removed the dirt from the Rock and took care to show his respect towards it.[92]

A Byzantine attempt to re-occupy Homs

The spies of Abu 'Ubaydah came to him and told him that the Byzantines had gathered and Heraclius had addressed them and sent them in his direction. Abu 'Ubaydah decided to tell this news from his troops, and he called the leaders of the Muslims, and the prominent and righteous among them, together to consult them and hear their opinions.[93] Mu'âdh ibn Jabal al-Anṣâri thought that they should not withdraw, and he said, "Are the Byzantines seeking to do to their enemy something more harmful than what you want to do to yourselves? Will you give to them a land that Allah enabled you to

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[91] *Majmoo'at ar-Rasâ'il al-Kubra*, 2/57, 58.

[92] *Jawlah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, Pp. 203, 204.

[93] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila Dimashq*, Pp. 408, 409.

conquer where their heroes were killed and their troops defeated? By Allah, if you want to go back after having left it, you will find it very difficult." Abu 'Ubaydah said, "He has spoken sincerely and has spoken the truth, by Allah."[94] But events took a different turn, and the Muslims gave back to the people of Homs what they had collected from them. Abu 'Ubaydah ordered Ḥabeeb ibn Maslamah, "Give back to the local people with whom we made a treaty what we took from them, for we should not take anything from them if we do not protect them." And he said to them, "We are bound by the same terms between us and you, and we will not retract anything so long as you do not do so. The only reason why we are returning your wealth to you is that we do not want to take your wealth when we cannot protect your land. We are simply moving to some other land and sending for our brothers to come to us, then we will face our enemy and fight. If Allah causes us to prevail, then we will fulfil our covenant with you, unless you change your minds." The next day, Abu 'Ubaydah ordered the Muslim army to march to Damascus, and Ḥabeeb ibn Maslamah called the people from whom he had taken the *jizyah* and returned their wealth to them. He told them what Abu 'Ubaydah had said, and the people of Homs started saying, "May Allah bring you back to us, and may Allah curse the Byzantines who used to rule over us. By Allah, they would not have returned anything to us, rather they would have confiscated it and taken whatever they could of our wealth. Your rule and justice are dearer to us than the oppression that we used to suffer."[95]

Abu 'Ubaydah sent Sufiyân ibn 'Awf to 'Umar on the night of the withdrawal from Homs to Damascus, saying, "Go to the caliph and give him my *salâm*, and tell him what you have seen and what the spies have told us, and what you know of the large numbers of the

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[94] *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 207.

[95] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila ash-Shâm*, Pp. 410, 411.

enemy, and what the Muslims have decided to do, namely withdraw." And he wrote a letter to send with him, in which he said: "My spies have come to me from the land of my enemy, from the town in which the king of the Byzantines was, and they told me that the Byzantines are heading towards us and have gathered against us in huge numbers that they never gathered against any army before us. I summoned the Muslims and told them the news, and I consulted with them. They agreed to withdraw from them until we heard your opinion. I am sending to you a man who has knowledge of what is happening here, so ask him whatever you want, for he is knowledgeable about that and he is trusted by us. We seek the help of Allah the Almighty and All-Knowing, He is sufficient for us and is the best disposer of affairs."[96]

The brilliant war plan drawn up by 'Umar (ﷺ) to save Abu 'Ubaydah (ﷺ)

When the news reached 'Umar, he wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) saying: "Send some troops with al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr, and send them straightaway, on the day when this letter reaches you, to Homs, for Abu 'Ubaydah is in danger." 'Umar had prepared a reserve cavalry in every region in the event of a sudden outbreak of war. In Koofah there were four thousand horses, with which Sa'd equipped the army that he sent to Syria. 'Umar also wrote to Sa'd, "Send Suhayl ibn 'Adiyy to al-Jazeerah with the troops, and let him go to ar-Raqqah, for the people of al-Jazeerah are the ones who incited the Byzantines against the people of Homs. And send 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abdullâh ibn 'Utbân to Naṣeebeen, and let them clear Ḥarrân and ar-Raha of the presence of any enemies. And send al-Waleed ibn 'Uqbah with the Arabs of al-Jazeerah from (the tribes of) Rabee'ah and Tunookh. And send 'Iyâḍ, and when fighting breaks

[96] *Aṭ-Ṭareeq ila ash-Shâm*, p. 411; *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/23, 25.

out, let them all come under the command of 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam."

Al-Qa'qâ' set out with four thousand men on the day the letter arrived, and headed towards Homs. 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam and the leaders of al-Jazeerah set out and headed towards the goals they were seeking. 'Umar set out from Madeenah to help Abu 'Ubaydah, heading towards Homs until he stopped in al-Jâbiyah. The people of al-Jazeerah who were participating in the siege of Homs with the Byzantines found out that the army had set out from Iraq, and they did not know whether they were heading for Homs or their own lands in al-Jazeerah, so they scattered, going back to their lands and their brethren, and they left the Byzantines facing the battle on their own. When Abu 'Ubaydah saw that the Byzantines' supporters from al-Jazeerah had let them down, he consulted Khâlid with a view to going out and fighting them, and Khâlid advised him to do that. So they went out and fought them, and Allah granted them victory. Al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr came with the people of Koofah three days after the battle, and 'Umar came to al-Jâbiyah, and they wrote to him, telling him of the victory and the arrival of reinforcements three days after the victory, and asking him about the ruling on dividing the booty. He wrote to them telling them: "Give them (the reinforcements) a share, for they were coming to help you, and your enemy scattered because of them."[97] And he said, "May Allah reward the people of Koofah with good, for they take care of their own land and they send reinforcements to other regions too."[98]

If we study this brilliant war plan which was drawn up by 'Umar to confuse the enemy and scatter them, we will see the military genius of 'Umar. He ordered that a swift army be sent from Koofah to Homs to undertake the rescue mission, and he himself set out with an

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[97] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/24, 25.

[98] Ibid, 5/25.

army from Madeenah. All of this appears to be something normal, but the amazing aspect is the fact that he ordered an army to be sent to the land of the enemy fighters, to force them to leave the battlefield and return to their land in order to defend it. This plan succeeded and they scattered and it then became easy for the Muslims to finish off the Byzantines.[99]

The conquest of al-Jazeerah (Mesopotamia), 17 A.H.

We have stated above that the Byzantines and the people of al-Jazeerah attacked Homs and besieged Abu 'Ubaydah and the Muslims who were in the city. 'Umar sent word to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, ordering him to send an army from Koofah as reinforcements to the people of Homs, and to send an army to al-Jazeerah. Sa'd sent an army from Koofah under the leadership of al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, and he sent armies to al-Jazeerah, all of them under the leadership of 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam (ﷺ). These armies set out for al-Jazeerah. Suhayl ibn 'Adiyy followed the Euphrates route until he reached ar-Raqqah, where he lay siege to them, and they found themselves caught between two Muslim forces, in Iraq and Syria, so they made a peace deal with them. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abdullâh ibn 'Utbân followed the Tigris route until he reached Naṣeebeen, where the people made a peace deal as the people of ar-Raqqah had done. When the people of ar-Raqqah and Naṣeebeen submitted, 'Iyâḍ got Suhayl and 'Abdullâh to join him, and took them all to Ḥarrân, conquering all the cities on the way. When they reached Ḥarrân, the people hastened to submit and agreed to pay the *jizyah*. Then he sent 'Abdullâh and Suhayl to ar-Ruha and make them agree to pay the *jizyah*. Thus all of al-Jazeerah was conquered by peaceful means, and it was the easiest of lands to conquer.[100]

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[99] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi,* 11/137.

[100] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari,* 5/26-30.

2. The Conquests of Egypt and Libya

The Muslims had strong motives for conquering Egypt. There was the faith which they wanted to spread everywhere, and Egypt was also connected to Palestine, so it was natural that after conquering Palestine, the Muslims would turn their attention to Egypt. The Muslims had split the Byzantine Empire into two parts which were connected only by sea, when they overtook Syria. In Egypt and North Africa there were Byzantine troops and outposts, and Byzantium had a powerful navy at sea, but the Muslims would not be able to feel secure in Syria whilst Egypt remained under Byzantine control. Egypt was rich land, the source of Constantinople's food supply. If the Muslims conquered it, that would greatly weaken the influence of Byzantium and the Muslims in Syria and the Ḥijâz would feel secure because otherwise it was too easy for the Byzantines to reach the Ḥijâz by way of Egypt.[101]

Another factor was that the Coptic Egyptians themselves were suffering from persecution at the hands of the Byzantines, who lived in Egypt only in fortified military outposts. Why not make the most of this opportunity, especially since news of the Muslims' justice had already reached Egypt?[102] As for the Byzantine troops themselves, fear must have seized them[103] when they saw their king leaving Syria to become part of the Muslim state.

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ understood all this, and reached the conclusion that the Byzantines in Egypt would be unable to withstand the Muslims, but if Egypt was left without being conquered, it would remain a potential threat to them. This is what

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[101] *'Aṣr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah* by al-'Umari, p. 348.

[102] *Dirâsât fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwah wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 357.

[103] *Futooḥ ash-Shâm* by al-Azdi, p. 118.

'Amr ibn al-Âṣ himself stated[104], despite the numerous reports which suggest that the first one to think of conquering Egypt was 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, or the caliph himself, with no input on the part of 'Amr, or that the caliph agreed under pressure from 'Amr.[105] Despite these differences, all the factors mentioned above prove that the plan to conquer Egypt was not merely a thought that crossed 'Amr's mind, of which the caliph did not approve, or that they did not have a complete picture of Egypt, the land and the size of the enemy forces there. Historical reports support what I have said. Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam stated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb wrote to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ after the conquest of Syria, telling him: "Urge the people to march with you to Egypt, and whoever wants to go with you, take him along."[106] It says in aṭ-Ṭabari: " 'Umar stayed in Aeelia' for a few days after he had made a peace treaty with its people and entered the city, then he sent 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ to Egypt and appointed him as its governor, if Allah enabled him to conquer it. He sent az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm after him with reinforcements. That is confirmed by the fact that the number of these reinforcements whom 'Umar sent to Egypt reached twelve thousand. He also ordered him to conquer Alexandria, and there is no dispute on this matter."[107]

Would it have been possible for 'Amr to penetrate deeply into Egypt without the consent of the caliph? We know that the Muslims, whether commanders or soldiers, were extremely obedient and disciplined, hence we repeat that the conquest of Egypt could only have been part of a plan that had already been drawn up by the caliph and his commanders; it was not something that was done on the spur of the moment.[108]

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104 *Dirâsât fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwah wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 357.
105 *An-Nujoom az-Zâhirah*, 1/4-7.
106 *Futooḥ Miṣr*, p. 57.
107 *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/84-93.
108 *Dirâsât fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwah wa al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, Pp. 357, 358.

2.1. The Islamic Conquest of Egypt

The conquest of Egypt is regarded as the third stage in the conquests of the major regions of the Byzantine state. 'Amr's march from Palestine to Egypt ran parallel to the sea. He moved from Rafaḥ to al-'Areesh to al-Farma (Pelusium), and his progress continued onward to Cairo and then Alexandria. This shows us the military talent of 'Amr, since he chose this route, perhaps because the Byzantines did not have a heavy military presence along this route as they did in Syria, or perhaps because this route was known to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ. The sequence of conquests was in the order listed below.[109]

2.1.1. The conquest of al-Farma (Pelusium)

'Amr headed west, and he did not encounter any Byzantine troops except in al-Farma. But before that the Egyptians had met him and welcomed him. The first place where fighting took place was in al-Farma where the Byzantines barricaded themselves in the city to face the Muslims, confident of their ability to defend the city and repel the Muslims. After they realized that the Muslims who had come with 'Amr were few in number and were less well equipped and were lacking in siege machines, 'Amr found out the number of Byzantine troops, their level of preparedness and that they were many times greater in numbers than his troops. He had two options for the conquest of al-Farma: either to attack and open the gates, or else be patient and wait until hunger forced the people to come out. The Muslims siege of the city intensified, and the stubbornness of the Byzantines increased. The siege lasted for several months, during

[109] *'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ al-Qâ'id wa as-Siyâsi*, by Dr. 'Abdur-Raḥeem Muhammad, p. 79.

which some of the Byzantine forces would come out to fight the Muslims from time to time, but the Muslims killed them all. 'Amr would encourage and exhort the Muslims with powerful words, such as when he said: "O' people of Islam and faith, O' bearers of the Qur'an, O' Companions of Muhammad (ﷺ)! Be patient like men and be steadfast; do not retreat. Sharpen your spears and protect yourselves with your shields, and remain quiet except for the remembrance of Allah. Do not do anything unless I tell you to."[110]

One day a group of Byzantines came out to fight a group of Muslims, and the Muslims defeated them. The Byzantines fled towards the city, followed by the Muslims, but the Muslims were faster than them, and they gained control of the gate before the Byzantines reached it. The first of the Muslims to enter the city was Asmeeqa', and it was an evident victory. It is worth mentioning that the Egyptian Copts who were in the city helped the Muslims and showed them the weak points. They welcomed the Muslims in Atmeedah. After al-Farma had been occupied, the Muslims destroyed its walls and fortifications so that it would not be of any use to the Byzantines if — Allah forbid — they returned to the city. Then 'Amr addressed his troops, saying: "O' people, praise be to Allah Who has granted victory to the Muslim army. Allah is Great, Who has honoured us by Islam. But beware of thinking that we have achieved everything we wanted, and do not let this victory make you complacent. There is still a difficult road ahead of us, and the mission with which the caliph has entrusted us is far from having been accomplished. You have to be patient and obey your leaders. The people here will know that we are the troops of peace, so we should not cause any mischief in the land, rather we should restore it and set a good example of the teachings of the Messenger (ﷺ)."[111]

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[110] *Fatooḥ Miṣr* by Ṣubḥi Nada, Pp. 19, 20.

[111] Ibid, p. 20.

'Amr was confident that the city was no longer good to protect any army that might seek shelter therein. He checked on his army to see what he had lost during the battle, and he was saddened to learn that he had lost some men who had been eager to conquer Egypt, but they had died before achieving that. He feared that if the battles continued in this fashion, he would not be able to reach his goal. But Allah compensated him for those whom he had lost, and his army was joined by many men from the Arab tribes of Râshidah and Lakhm who lived in Jabal al-Ḥalâl.[112] 'Amr and his army continued westwards, not encountering any resistance, until they arrived in al-Qawâṣir (al-Qaṣâṣeen), from which he headed south until he reached Wâdi aṭ-Ṭambalân, which is near at-Tell al-Kabeer. Then he continued southwards until he reached Balbees. The author of *an-Nujoom az-Zâhirah* said: "Then 'Amr advanced, meeting with only a little resistance, until he came to Balbees."[113]

2.1.2. The conquest of Balbees

At Balbees the Byzantines appeared with a large force, aiming to stop 'Amr from heading towards the fortress of Babaliyon and seeking to engage the Muslims in fighting. 'Amr (ﷺ) said to them: "Do not hasten to fight until we have discussed the matter. Let Abu Maryam and Abu Maryâm come to me." At that point they refrained from fighting and the two men went out to meet him. He called them to become Muslim or pay the *jizyah*, and told them of the Prophet's recommendation to treat the people of Egypt with kindness because of Hâjar, the mother of Ismâ'eel. Muslim narrated in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ* that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: «"You are going to conquer Egypt, which is a land where the *qirâṭ*[114] is used. When you conquer it, treat

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[112] *Jawlah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 214.

[113] *An-Nujoom az-Zâhirah*, 1/7, 8.

[114] *Qirâṭ*: The *qirâṭ* is a measure of weight or volume which varies from one=

its people kindly, for they have rights and have ties of kinship — or ties through marriage."»[115] They said: "That is a distant relationship; no one would pay attention to it but the Prophets. Give us security until we come back." 'Amr said, "One like me cannot be deceived, but I will give you respite for three days." They said, "Give us more," so he gave them one extra day. They went back to al-Muqawqis, the ruler of Egypt[116], and Arṭaboon, the Byzantine governor, and told them about the Muslims. Arṭaboon refused and insisted on fighting; the Muslims defeated him and drove him and his troops back to Alexandria.[117] It is worth mentioning something that is indicative of the Muslims' noble attitude and chivalry. When Allah enabled the Muslims to conquer Balbees, they found therein the daughter of al-Muqawqis whose name was Armanoosah. She was close to her father, but she was visiting the city of Balbees with her servant Barbara in an attempt to escape marriage to Constantine the son of Heraclius, whom she did not want to marry. When some of the Muslim army managed to capture Armanoosah, 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ gathered the *Ṣaḥâbah* together and reminded them of the words of Allah (ﷻ):

﴾Is there any reward for good other than good?﴿ *(Qur'an 55: 60)*

Then he said: "Al-Muqawqis sent a gift to our Prophet; I think we should return his daughter to him, and all of her servants and entourage whom we have captured, and their wealth that we seized." They agreed to that.[118] So 'Amr sent her back to her father with honour, along with all her jewels and male and female slaves. Her servant Barbara said to her during the journey: "O' my mistress, the

=era to another.

[115] Muslim, *Kitâb Faḍâ'il aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 2543.

[116] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/100.

[117] *Fatooḥ Miṣr*, p. 24.

[118] *Ad-Dawr as-Siyâsi li'l-Ṣafwah fee Ṣadr al-Islam*, p. 431.

Arabs are surrounding us on all sides." Armanoosah said, "I feel that my life and my honour are safe among the tents of the Arabs, but I do not feel safe in the palace of my father."[119] When she reached her father, he was very pleased with her and the way that the Muslims had treated her.[120]

2.1.3. The battle of Umm Daneen

Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam reported that 'Amr went with his army and conquered Balbees after fighting that lasted for nearly one month. Then he went to Umm Daneen, which is also known as al-Muqassas; it is located on the Nile. The Muslims fought an intense battle around it, and 'Amr sent word to the caliph asking for reinforcements. The caliph sent him four thousand men; in charge of every thousand was a man who was as effective as one thousand men. They were: az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm, al-Miqdâd ibn al-Aswad, 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit and Maslamah ibn Mukhallad; or it was said that the fourth one was Khârijah ibn Ḥudhâfah. 'Umar said in his letter to him: "Remember that you have with you twelve thousand men, and twelve thousand will never be defeated for lack of numbers."[121] The Byzantines came out with the Egyptians to confront the Muslims, and a fierce battle broke out in which 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ used his military genius as Khâlid ibn al-Waleed had done in the battles of Iraq. He divided his army into three groups, one of which was to lie in wait for the enemy in al-Jabal al-Ahmar, another was to lie in wait by the Nile, near Umm Daneen, and the rest of the army was to face the enemy. When fighting between the two sides broke out, the troops who were lying in wait in al-Jabal al-Aḥmar emerged and attacked the

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[119] *Fatooḥ Miṣr* by Ṣubḥi Nada, p. 24.

[120] Ibid, p. 24.

[121] *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 218.

Byzantines, who broke ranks and fled towards Umm Daneen, where they were met by the group that was lying in wait near the city. Thus they found themselves caught between the three divisions of the Muslim army; they were defeated and their army destroyed, and some of them fled to the fortress of Babaliyon.[122] Thus the Muslims won this battle and Allah protected them from the evil of their enemies by His grace. That was due to the brilliance of their leader who drew up this brilliant plan which scattered the enemy forces.[123]

2.1.4. The battle of the fortress of Babaliyon

'Amr and his army advanced towards the fortress of Babaliyon and besieged it. The siege lasted for seven months, during which time al-Muqawqis sent his envoys to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ to negotiate with him. 'Amr responded by stipulating that he either become Muslim, pay the *jizyah* or fight. Al-Muqawqis chose to pay the *jizyah*, and wrote to Heraclius asking his permission to do so. But Heraclius did not accept that; he got angry, rebuked him severely and summoned him to Constantinople, then he banished him. When the conquest of the fortress of Babaliyon took too long, az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm said: "I am going to sacrifice myself for Allah, and I hope that Allah will grant victory to the Muslims thereby."[124] 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ was besieging the fortress of Babaliyon, then they climbed up the walls of the fortress at night and fought violently with the soldiers. The first one to climb the fortress was az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm. He placed a ladder near the bird market (*souq al-ḥamâm*) then climbed up. He told the Muslims to attack the fortress when they heard his *takbeer*. Soon az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm reached the top, and said *takbeer*,

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[122] Op. cit., p. 219.

[123] Ibid.

[124] *Al-Futooḥât al-Islâmiyah*, by Dr. 'Abdul-'Azeez ash-Shanâwi, p. 91.

wielding his sword. He said *takbeer* and the Muslims outside the fortress responded. The people inside the fortress did not doubt that the Muslims had conquered their fortress, so they fled. Az-Zubayr led his companions to the gate of Babaliyon and opened it, and the Muslims rushed in and seized the fortress by force. But 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ made a treaty stipulating that the Byzantine troops bring out with them only the supplies that they needed for a few days; the fortress of Babaliyon and its stores and weapons would remain as booty for the Muslims. Then Abu 'Abdullâh destroyed the towers and walls of the fortress.[125]

2.2. The conquest of Alexandria

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ and his troops stayed in the fortress of Babaliyon for several months, so that the troops could rest whilst awaiting permission from the caliph 'Umar to proceed with the conquest of Alexandria. When permission came, 'Amr left a strong Muslim force in the fortress, and set out with his troops from Babaliyon in May 641 C.E. (*Jumâda al-Âkhirah* 21 A.H.). He was accompanied by a number of Egyptian leaders who realized that their interests lay in supporting the victorious Muslim forces. They repaired the roads for them, and set up bridges and marketplaces. The Egyptians became their helpers in their aim to fight the Byzantines.[126] 'Amr preferred to travel along the left hand side of the Nile, where the province of Buḥayrah is now, because the desert gave him plenty of room for his horses and troops, and enabled him to avoid the many streams that would have impeded his progress if he had travelled through the Nile delta. 'Amr did not encounter any fighting except a little at Marfooṭ or aṭ-Ṭarânah, as the Arab

[125] Op. cit.

[126] *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 224.

historians call it.[127] Then he crossed the river to the eastern side at the fortified city of Nuqyoos, because it contained a strong fortress and 'Amr was afraid to leave it behind and move on. But instead of barricading themselves against the Muslims in their fortresses, the Byzantines used ships to fight the Muslims and prevent them from approaching their cities; they fired arrows at the Muslims to prevent them getting near the river, then they fled in their ships towards Alexandria. But those who stayed in the fortresses quickly surrendered to the Muslims and the Muslims entered them victorious. They spent a number of days in "mop up" operations against the enemy[128], and 'Amr sent his commander Shareek ibn Sumayy to pursue the fleeing Byzantines. When he met them he had only a few soldiers with him, so the Byzantines' hopes were raised and they surrounded him. He sought protection from them in a hill that later became known as the hill of Shareek. He sent word to 'Amr asking for reinforcements and as soon as the Byzantines realized that the reinforcements were on their way to the Muslims they fled.[129]

At Sulṭays, six miles to the south of Damanhoor, the second encounter between 'Amr and the Byzantines took place. There was a fierce battle in which they were defeated and fled.[130] It is most unfortunate that these battles, in which the Muslims fought with limited numbers against forces that were vastly superior to them in terms of both numbers and equipment, and which lasted for a number of days, get no more than a few lines or a few words from the Muslim historians, whereas they devoted dozens of pages to the battles of al-Qâdisiyah, Yarmook and Nahawand.[131] One of these battles which

[127] Op. cit., p. 224.
[128] Ibid, p. 225.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid.

our Arab sources did not cover properly was the battle of Kiryoon, which was the last of this chain of fortresses that stretched from Babaliyon to Alexandria. The Byzantine commander Theodore had barricaded himself there, and a fierce battle that lasted for more than ten days took place. In spite of that, Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam does not say more than these few words about it: "Then they met in Kiryoon, and fought there for more than ten days. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr was in the forefront and the flag-bearer that day was Wardân, the freed slave of 'Amr. 'Amr offered the fear prayer that day, then Allah granted victory to the Muslims. The Muslims killed a huge number of them, and chased them as far as Alexandria. There are reports of the heroic deeds of 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr and Wardân, the freed slave of his father, during that battle."[132]

At the time of the Muslim conquest, Alexandria was the capital of Egypt and the second city of the Byzantine Empire after Constantinople; it was also the foremost trading city in the world. The Byzantines understood the seriousness of a Muslim takeover of the city and were very concerned about that. Heraclius said: "If the Arabs seize Alexandria, that will signal the end of Byzantine rule."[133]

The historical narrators claim that Heraclius prepared himself to go out to Alexandria himself to lead the fight against the Muslims, but when he had completed his preparations, Allah caused him to die, thus Allah sufficed the Muslims against him.[134] The Byzantine state was thrown into turmoil after the death of Heraclius, when he was succeeded by his two sons, Constantine and Heraclius II (Heraclianus). The empress Martina, the mother of Heraclianus, also

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[132] *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, by Ḥamdi Shaheen, p. 226.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Ibid, quoting from Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam.

played a part in ruling. Constantine died a mere hundred days after the death of his father, which caused fingers to be pointed at the empress, who wanted her son to be the sole ruler. A revolution broke out against her and the turmoil and civil war continued for several months, until Constanus the son of Constantine took control as the partner of his uncle Heraclianus.[135]

In addition to its huge, strong walls and ample defences, Alexandria also enjoyed a unique defensive location. To the north it was protected by the sea, where the Byzantines held complete sway at that time. The lake of Maryoot protected it to the south, because crossing it was very difficult, if not impossible. At that time one of the branches of the Nile, which was known as Naz'at ath-Tha'wbân, encircled the city to the west. Thus there was only one route to the city, from the east, namely the road which connected it to Kiryoon.[136]

The siege lasted for several months, which made 'Amr fear that his troops may become tired or start to despair of ever defeating their enemy. So he decided to send his troops through the Delta area and the villages of Upper Egypt. The length of the Alexandria siege also caused the caliph 'Umar to worry, and he started to entertain doubts about the soldiers' readiness to sacrifice themselves and their initiative. He thought that this might be because of some sins that they had committed.[137] He explained that in a letter to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ in which he said: "I am very surprised at how long it is taking to conquer Egypt, as you have been fighting for the last two years, unless it is because of some sins that you have committed, or you have started to love this world as your enemy does. Allah, may He be blessed and exalted, only grants victory to people who are sincere. I

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[135] Op. cit., p. 227.

[136] Ibid, p. 225.

[137] Ibid, p. 227.

am sending to you four individuals (meaning az-Zubayr and his companions), and I have told you that each one of them is equivalent to one thousand men as far as I know, unless something has changed them. When you receive this letter of mine, address the people and urge them to fight their enemy. Encourage them to be patient and to have the right intention. Give these four men the position of leadership. Tell the people that they should all attack as one under their leadership, and let that be at noon on Friday, for that is a time when divine mercy descends and it is a time when prayers are answered. Let the people beseech Allah and ask Him for victory over their enemies." When 'Amr received the letter, he gathered the people together and read it to them, then he called those four men and appointed them as leaders before the people. He ordered the people to purify themselves and pray two *rak'ahs*, then to turn to Allah and ask Him for victory. They did that and Allah granted them victory.[138]

It was narrated that 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ consulted Maslamah ibn Mukhallad al-Anṣâri and said: "Advise me about fighting these people." Maslamah said: "I think that you should choose a man who has knowledge and experience from among the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), and put him in charge of the people, then he should be the one to initiate and take care of the fighting." 'Amr asked, "Who should that be?" He said, " 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit." 'Amr summoned him, and when he came close he wanted to dismount from his horse, but 'Amr said to him, "I urge you not to dismount. Give me your spear." He handed it to him, and 'Amr took off his turban and tied it to the spear, and he appointed him as leader of the fight against the Byzantines. Allah granted him victory and Alexandria was conquered at his hands that same day.[139]

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[138] Op. cit., p. 228.

[139] *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 228.

According to one report: "I thought about this matter and I realized that no one could lead the Muslims to victory except those who had led them to victory during the early days," meaning the Anṣâr. So he summoned 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit and appointed him as leader, and Allah granted victory at his hands.[140]

Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam narrated that the siege of Alexandria lasted for nine months, and that it was conquered at the beginning of Muharram in 20 A.H.[141], which coincides with 21 December 640 C.E., whereas Butler concludes in his study on the conquest of Egypt that the siege started at the end of June 640 C.E. and the city surrendered on 8 November 641 C.E., which corresponds with 7 *Dhu al-Ḥijjah* 21 A.H. This view may be more correct, especially when we refer to what is mentioned in the letter of 'Umar to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ: "You have been fighting for the last two years." The time between 'Amr's arrival in al-'Areesh in December 639 C.E. and the surrender of Alexandria in November 641 C.E. is equivalent to two Hijri years.

'Amr did not harm the people of Alexandria; he did not kill them or take their women captive; rather he treated them as *ahl adh-dhimmah*, like the people of Babaliyon. After things stabilized, he left some of his troops as guards in Alexandria and the rest of his troops fanned out to conquer the remaining Byzantine strongholds and pockets in Egypt. Thus was achieved the conquest of the Mediterranean coastline and its major cities such as Rasheed, Dimyâṭ and others, and the Muslims seized full control of both the Delta region and upper Egypt.[142]

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[140] *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 212.

[141] *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 229.

[142] Ibid.

2.3. The conquest of Barqah and Tripoli

After consolidating the conquest of Egypt, 'Amr set out to continue his conquests westwards, as the Byzantines had troops in Barqah and Tripoli and may thus have been tempted to attack the Muslims in Egypt if the opportunity arose. So he set off towards Barqah with his troops in 22 A.H. The road between Alexandria and Barqah at that time was filled with greenery and buildings, and he did not encounter any fighting along this route. When he reached Barqah he made a peace treaty with its people, stipulating that they would pay the *jizyah*. After the conquest of Barqah, its people used to send their *kharâj* to the governor of Egypt without anyone urging them to do so. They were the best of people in North Africa and did not cause any trouble.

Then after that 'Amr marched towards Tripoli, which was strongly fortified and held a large Byzantine force. They closed its gates and endured a siege which lasted for many months, during which the Muslims did not manage to achieve anything. The sea lay on the other side of the city, directly adjoining the houses; there was no wall between the city and the sea. Some of the Muslim troops became aware of this, so they snuck into the city from the seaward side and shouted *takbeer*. The Byzantines had no means of escape except their ships, so 'Amr also attacked with his troops, and none of them escaped except those who managed to get away in their ships. The Muslims seized booty in the city, and 'Amr sent his troops into its environs. 'Amr wanted to continue his conquests to the west and to continue on to Tunisia and the rest of North Africa, and he wrote to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb about that, but the caliph was concerned about the Muslim troops going into new territory before consolidating their hold on the lands that they had conquered during their swift march from Syria to Tripoli. So he ordered the Muslim forces to stop at Tripoli. Thus the Islamic state expanded during the reign of 'Umar

ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) to include a vast area which stretched from the Jayhoon river and Sindh in the east to the deserts of North Africa in the west, and from the mountains of Asia Minor and Armenia in the north to the Arabian Sea and Nubia in the south. It was a single international state, multi-racial, multi-faith, multi-cultural; its people lived under the justice and mercy of Islam, which protected their rights and granted them a life of dignity, despite their differences in religion, culture and customs.[143]

3. Important Lessons from the Conquest of Egypt

3.1. The mission of 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit al-Anṣâri to al-Muqawqis

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ besieged the fortress of Babaliyon, and al-Muqawqis sent the following letter to 'Amr:

"You have penetrated our land and insisted on fighting us, and you have stayed in our land for too long. You are no more than a small group and the Byzantines have prepared themselves and are about to attack you; they have the equipment and weapons. This Nile is besieging you too, and you are prisoners in our hands. Send us some of your men so that we may listen to what they say. Perhaps we can resolve this conflict in a way that is pleasing to both us and you, and the fighting can stop before the Byzantines attack you, after which there will be no room for talk and you will regret it if things turn out differently than you had hoped. Send us some of your companions, so that we can reach a deal with which we are both pleased."

[143] *Ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 231.

When the envoys of al-Muqawqis came to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, he detained them for two days and two nights, until al-Muqawqis feared for them and said to his companions: "Do you think that they have killed the envoys or detained them, and that they regard that as permissible in their faith?" But all that 'Amr sought to achieve by that was to demonstrate that the Muslims were not concerned about these proposals. Then 'Amr sent word back with the envoys: "There are only three option between me and you: either you enter Islam and you will be our brothers, with the same rights as us; if you refuse, then you must pay the *jizyah* with willing submission, and feel yourselves subdued (cf. Qur'an 9: 29); otherwise we will fight against you and be patient till Allah gives judgement. And He is the Best of judges (cf. Qur'an 10: 109).[144] When the envoys came back to al-Muqawqis he asked them: "How did you find them?" They said, "We have seen a people to whom death is dearer than life and humility is dearer to them than high status. Not one of them has any desire or love for this world; rather they sit on the ground and eat on their knees. Their leader is like one of them and those of high status cannot be distinguished from the lowly nor the master from the slave. When the time for prayer comes, not one of them stays behind. They wash their limbs with water and stand with humility in their prayer."

At that, al-Muqawqis said: "By the One Who may be sworn by, if these people wanted to take on the mountains they would destroy them. No one has the capability to fight them. If we do not take the opportunity to make a deal with them today whilst they are surrounded by this Nile, they will not respond to us after today when they manage to move out of the position where they are now." Al-Muqawqis sent his envoys back to them and said: "Send some of your envoys to us so that we may talk to them and negotiate a deal

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[144] *'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit Ṣaḥâbi Kabeer wa Fâtiḥ Mujâhid*, p. 91.

that will be good for us and for you." 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ sent ten men, one of whom was 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit. 'Amr ordered him to be the one to speak to the people, and not to accept any deal but one of these three options[145], because the caliph had issued instructions to that effect. 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit was black, and when they travelled by boat to al-Muqawqis and entered his place, 'Ubâdah stepped forward and al-Muqawqis was alarmed because of his blackness. He said, "Take this black man away from me and let someone else come and speak to me!" They said, "This black man is the best of us in knowledge and wisdom. He is our leader and the best of us, and has been appointed over us. We all refer to his opinion, and our leader has appointed him over us and ordered us not to go against him." Al-Muqawqis said to the delegation, "How could you accept this black man as the best among you? Rather he should be the least among you." They said, "No; even though he is black as you can see, he is the best in status among us, one of the foremost among us and one of the wisest. Blackness is not something bad among us." Al-Muqawqis said to 'Ubâdah, "Come forward, O' black man, and speak to me gently, for your blackness alarms me, and if you speak harshly that will alarm me further." 'Ubâdah went forward and said, "I have heard what you said. Among my companions whom I left behind are a thousand men who are all as black as me, and even blacker than me and more terrifying to behold. If you saw them you would be even more alarmed. My youth is gone, but nevertheless I would not be scared if one hundred men of my enemy wanted to face me all at once, and the same is true of my companions, for our hope and our desire is to strive in jihad for the sake of Allah, seeking the pleasure of Allah. The reason for our campaign against our enemies who wage war against Allah is not the hope of worldly gains or the

[145] The options were, as stated above: becoming Muslim, paying the *jizyah* or fighting.

accumulation of wealth; rather Allah has permitted that to us and made the booty we acquire permissible for us. But none of us cares whether he has a *qintâr* of gold or has nothing but a *dirham*, because all we want from this world is something to eat and ward off hunger, and a cloth to wrap around ourselves. If one of us owns nothing more than that, that is enough. If he gets a *qintâr* of gold he will spend it for the sake of Allah and be content with the little that is left in his hand, because the pleasure of this world is not true pleasure and its luxury is not true luxury; rather real pleasure and luxury come in the Hereafter. This is how our Lord has guided us and our Prophet has taught us; he advised us that our ambition in this world should be just to have enough to ward off hunger and cover our *'awrahs*; our main concern should be to please our Lord and strive in jihad against His enemies."

When al-Muqawqis heard that, he said to those who were around him: "Have you ever heard anything like what this man is saying? His appearance alarmed me but his words alarm me more than his appearance. Allah has sent this man and his companions out to destroy the world! I think that they are bound to prevail over the entire world."

Then al-Muqawqis turned to 'Ubâdah and said: "O' man, I have heard what you say about yourself and your companions. Indeed you have not achieved what you have achieved except because of what you have mentioned, and you have only prevailed over those over whom you have prevailed because of their love for this world. An innumerable Byzantine force has come to us to fight you, people who are known for their courage and toughness; none of them cares whom he is going to meet and fight. We know that you will not be able to tackle them, because you are weak and small in number. You have been in our land for many months, and you are suffering from hardship and lack of provisions. We feel sorry for you because of your weakness, low numbers and lack of resources, and

we will be happy to help you by giving each man among you two *dinârs*; we will also give your leader one hundred *dinârs* and your caliph one thousand. Take it and go back to your own land before there comes to you a force that you cannot deal with."

'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit (ﷺ) said: "Do not deceive yourself or your companions. You are trying to scare us by telling us about this Byzantine force and its great numbers, and telling us that we cannot tackle them. But this is not something that you can scare us with, and it is not something that will make us change our plans. If what you say is true, then by Allah, that is the most encouraging reason to fight them, and will make us more keen to do so, because that will be more pleasing to our Lord. If we are all killed, that will enable us to earn His good pleasure and attain Paradise, and there is nothing dearer to us than that. The outcome will be good in either case. Either we will make great gains in this world, if we defeat you, or we will make great gains in the Hereafter, if you defeat us, and gains in the Hereafter are dearer to us, and that is what we are striving for. Allah says to us in His Book:

﴾How often a small group overcame a mighty host by Allah's Leave? And Allah is with *aṣ-Ṣâbiroon* [the patient].﴿ *(Qur'an 2: 249)*

There is no man among us who does not pray morning and evening for Allah to bless him with martyrdom and not to send him back to his wife and child. There is no one among us who worries about that which he has left behind. Each one of us has entrusted those whom he has left behind, wife and children, to his Lord. All our concern is focused on what lies before us. As for your saying that we are enduring hardship and have little provision, we are having an easy time of it. If the whole world was ours, we would not want for ourselves any more than what we have now. Think about what you want to do and tell us, for there is no deal between us and we will not

accept anything from you but one of these three options. Choose whichever one you want and do not indulge in wishful thinking. This is what my commander has told me to do, and this is what the caliph has commanded him to do, and this is the advice that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave to us before. Either respond to Islam, which is the only religion that Allah will accept, and it is the religion of His Prophets, Messengers and angels, and Allah has commanded us to fight those who oppose it and turn away from it until they enter it; whoever does that will have the same rights and duties as we do and he will be our brother in the religion of Allah. If you and your companions accept that, then you will be blessed in this world and in the Hereafter, and we will refrain from fighting you and will not harm you. If you refuse, then you must pay the *jizyah* with willing submission, and feel yourselves subdued (cf. Qur'an 9: 29), and we will agree on the amount of *jizyah* to be paid on an annual basis, and we will fight on your behalf anyone who attacks you or attacks any of your land, persons or wealth. We will do that for you if you are under our protection, and that will be a covenant that is binding upon us before Allah. If you refuse, then there will be no option than to let the sword decide between us and you, until we all die or we attain what we want from you. This is our promise before Allah, and there is no other option for us except this. Choose for yourselves."

Al-Muqawqis said: "This will never be possible. All that you want is to enslave us as long as the earth remains." 'Ubâdah said to him, "It is up to you; choose what you want." Al-Muqawqis asked, "Why can we not have an option other than these three?" 'Ubâdah raised his hands and said, "No, by the Lord of heaven, by the Lord of earth and the Lord of all things. You can have no other deal with us, so choose for yourself."

Al-Muqawqis turned to his companions and asked: "Have you decided what you want?" They said, "Would anyone accept this

humiliation? As for their wanting us to enter their religion, that can never happen. We will not leave the religion of the Messiah, son of Mary and enter into a religion that we do not know. As for their wanting to imprison us and make us slaves forever, death is better than that. If they accept for us to give them many times more than what we have given them, that would be better." Al-Muqawqis said to 'Ubâdah, "The people have refused. What do you think? Go back to your leader and tell him that we will give you many more times what you are hoping for, and go away."

'Ubâdah and his companions left, and al-Muqawqis said to those who were around him: "Obey me, and let the people accept one of these three options, for by Allah you have no power to resist them, and if you do not respond to them willingly you will make a worse deal with them unwillingly." They asked him, "Which option should we choose?' He said, "I shall tell you. As for entering another religion, I would not tell you to do that. As for fighting them, I know that you will never be able to prevail over them, and you will never persevere as they do. So there is nothing left but the third option." They said, "So we will be enslaved to them forever?" He said, "Yes, being slaves, but with full authority in your land, knowing that you, your wealth and your children are safe, is better then all of you dying, and being slaves, sold and scattered throughout the land and enslaved forever, you and your families and children." They said, "Death is preferable to that."[146]

From this dialogue that took place between 'Ubâdah and al-Muqawqis, we can see the smartness of 'Ubâdah and his understanding of what his opponent was aiming at, and he was not influenced by these methods that he used to try to affect the outcome. During this discussion, 'Ubâdah did not forget to call al-Muqawqis to

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[146] *An-Nujoom az-Zâhirah, Mulook Miṣr wa al-Qâhirah,* 1/10-16.

Islam and encourage him to enter the faith, and to demonstrate the openness of the Muslims towards other nations and religions, which had a good impact on al-Muqawqis, who chose to make a peace deal with the Muslims.[147]

3.2. Some tactics of war during the conquest of Egypt

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ practised many of the tactics of war during the conquest of Egypt, such as the following:

3.2.1. Psychological warfare

When al-Muqawqis commanded the women to stand on the walls of Babaliyon, facing inwards, and he made the armed men stand facing towards the Muslims to terrify them, 'Amr sent word to him saying: "We have seen what you have done, but it is not by our numbers that we have defeated our enemies. We met your king (emperor) and you know what happened to him." Al-Muqawqis said to his companions: "These people are speaking the truth. They expelled our king from his kingdom and drove him back to Constantinople. We should submit."[148] 'Amr was one of the leaders who used psychological warfare to terrify the enemy and reduce their fighting spirit. In wartime he relied first on Allah, then on his smartness and military skills to achieve a single goal, which was a decisive victory at the end of the battle.[149]

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[147] *Al-Anṣâr fee al-'Aṣr ar-Râshidi*, p. 211.

[148] *Al-Ḥarb an-Nafsiyah* by Dr. Aḥmad Nawfal, p. 174.

[149] Ibid.

3.2.2. Ambushes and surprise attacks

'Amr also used the methods of ambush and surprise attacks in the battle of 'Ayn Shams. He made solid preparations which made it easy to achieve complete success. He sent ambush units by night to take up specific positions, which he chose well, and specified the time when they should launch their attacks, when the enemy was preoccupied with the battle, whereupon these units were to attack from right and left. He chose the right times and the right places to attack the enemy. Thus his ambush manoeuvres during this battle are regarded as being among the most successful of ambush operations.[150]

3.2.3. Ambushes during the siege

'Amr also succeeded in using ambush tactics during the siege of Babaliyon. Whilst the Byzantines were certain that the Muslims would not to be able to cause them any harm because of their strong fortifications and walls, and their ample supplies of provisions and weaponry, and because of the barriers they had erected with spikes on the gates of the fortress, and the ditch that had dried up when the level of the Nile dropped, they were taken by surprise one night when az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm and a group of fighters climbed the walls, shouting *takbeer*, and caught them unawares, wielding their swords. The defenders in the fortress were defeated and sought a peace treaty and promises of safety, and the Muslims entered the fortress victorious.[151]

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[150] *Al-Fann al-'Askari al-Islâmi*, p. 320.

[151] Ibid.

3.2.4. Patience in laying siege

During the sieges of Kiryoon and Alexandria, 'Amr relied on patience. When he realized that it would be difficult to achieve victory over the Byzantines who had holed up in their fortress in Kiryoon, he tried once to launch an attack, but the attack failed. So he continued with skirmishes and waited for the passage of time, the defenders' weariness, and the exhaustion of supplies and arms and men's patience to take effect. This is indeed what happened. After the siege of Kiryoon had lasted for more than ten days, the Byzantines realized that the Muslims were determined to carry on with the siege, then they realized that they had no alternative but to surrender and hand over the fortress to the attackers. The same thing happened during the siege of Alexandria, except that in the latter case the siege lasted for a longer time (three months), because the Byzantines were fully aware that this was the last chance for their army and indeed for all of them; if they fell in Alexandria then they would fall in Egypt and all of North Africa, and this is exactly what did happen.[152]

3.3. Sending the good news of the conquest to the caliph

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ sent Mu'âwiyah ibn Khadeej to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb with the good news of the conquest. Mu'âwiyah said to him: "Why don't you write a letter to send with me?" 'Amr said to him: "Why do I need to write a letter? Are you not an Arab man who can convey the message? Did you not see everything?" When he came to 'Umar he told him of the conquest of Alexandria, and 'Umar fell down in prostration and said, "Praise be to Allah." Mu'âwiyah ibn Khadeej told of how he conveyed the good news of the victory to the

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[152] Op. cit., p. 320.

caliph: "When 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ sent me to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, I reached the mosque and whilst I was sitting there, a slave woman came out of the house of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and saw me looking tired, wearing travelling clothes. She came to me and asked, 'Who are you?' I said, 'I am Mu'âwiyah ibn Khadeej, the envoy of 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ.' She went away, then she came rushing back and I could hear the rustling of her *izâr* against her legs. When she came up to me she said, 'Get up and answer the caliph, for his is calling you.' I followed her and when she went in, there I saw 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, holding his *ridâ'* in one hand and tying his *izâr* with the other. He asked, 'What (news) do you have?' I said, 'Good news, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen.* Allah has granted us victory in Alexandria.' He took me out to the mosque, and said to the *mu'adh-dhin*, 'Call out to the people, '*aṣ-Ṣalâtu Jâmi'ah* (prayer is about to begin)'.' Then he said to me, 'Stand up and tell your companions.' So I stood up and told them, then he prayed and went into his house, and turned to face the *qiblah* and said *du'â'*. Then he sat down and said, 'O' slave woman, is there any food?' She brought some bread and oil, and he said, 'Eat.' I ate only a little because I felt shy. He said, 'Eat, for the traveller loves food. If I wanted to eat, I would eat with you.' I felt shy but I ate a little. Then he said, 'What did you say, O' Mu'âwiyah, when you came to the mosque?' I said, 'I thought, perhaps the caliph is taking a nap.' He said, 'That is not the right thing to say — or to think — if I slept during the day I would have neglected the people, and if I slept during the night I would have neglected myself. How can I sleep when I have these two concerns, O' Mu'âwiyah?' "[153]

From this report we may conclude that the mosque in the earliest period of Islam was the most important means of conveying information, as the Muslims would gather there when they heard the

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[153] *Futooḥ Miṣr wa al-Maghrib*, p. 105; *Fatḥ Miṣr bayna ar-Ru'yah al-Islâmiyah wa ar-Ru'yah an-Naṣrâniyah* by Dr. Ibrâheem al-Mutanâwi, p. 114.

call, "*aṣ-Ṣalâtu Jâmi'ah* (prayer is about to begin)". This call meant that there was some important information to be conveyed to the Muslims. When they gathered, military, political or social statements would be read out to them. We also learn from this report something about the life of 'Umar (ﷺ) when he was the caliph of the Muslims, as he said to Mu'âwiyah ibn Khadeej: "If I slept during the day I would have neglected the people, and if I slept during the night I would have neglected myself. How can I sleep when I have these two concerns, O' Mu'âwiyah?" This points to his complete awareness of the rights of his own self and the rights of others. If a Muslim can combine both, then he will be one of the righteous and pious.[154]

3.4. 'Umar's keenness to fulfil promises

When the Muslims reached Bilheeb and their prisoners reached Yemen, their governor sent word to 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ saying: "I used to give the *jizyah* to those who were more hated to me than you, the Persians and the Byzantines. If you want me to pay the *jizyah* in return for giving back to me what you have taken of my land, I will do that." 'Amr wrote to 'Umar asking him for permission to do that, and they suspended fighting until they received 'Umar's response. The answer came back from 'Umar: "Indeed, ongoing *jizyah* is dearer to us than booty which is divided and then is as if it never existed. As for the prisoners, if their king gives you *jizyah* on condition that you give the prisoners the choice between Islam and the religion of their people, then whoever chooses Islam is one of the Muslims and whoever chooses the religion of his people, impose the *jizyah* on him. As for those who are scattered in other lands, we cannot return them. 'Amr made this offer to the ruler of Alexandria

[154] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi* by al-Ḥameedi, 11-12/348, 349.

and he accepted it. They gathered the prisoners and the Christians gathered, and they gave them the choice one by one. When someone chose Islam they said *takbeer*, and when someone chose Christianity they groaned and imposed the *jizyah*, until they were finished.[155]

This is regarded as evidence of the sincerity of the *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them), as they were unconcerned about worldly affairs and were focused on the Hereafter. They were genuinely keen to guide people to Islam, because the prisoners' entering Islam did not bring the Muslims any benefit in worldly terms, whereas if they continued to follow their religion that would bring some worldly gains, as they would be obliged to pay *jizyah* to the Muslims. Despite that we see 'Umar (ﷺ) ordering that the prisoners be given the choice between becoming Muslim or paying the *jizyah*. When that order was implemented, the *Ṣaḥâbah* and those who were with them said *takbeer* with more fervour than they had during the conquests whenever one of those Christians chose Islam, and they were distressed when someone chose to continue following his religion.

It is also worth noting the commitment of the *Ṣaḥâbah* to the deal that had been worked out, which is clear from the statement of 'Umar (ﷺ) in his letter: "As for those who are scattered in other lands, we cannot return them." According to another report, he said: "We do not want to make a peace deal with him that is based on conditions that we cannot fulfil."[156] 'Umar looked at his ability to fulfil conditions before concluding any deal with the enemy, so that the Muslims would not be in a position of being unable to fulfil the conditions. This attitude is indicative of the high degree of sincerity — which is one of the elements of victory — because the one who

[155] *Al-Kâmil fee at-Târeekh*, 2/177.
[156] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 12/351.

commits himself to something and then is unable to fulfil it may be excused, but if he thinks about it and tries to take precautions so that he will not find himself unable to fulfil the conditions, this is a sign of foresight and good management.[157]

3.5. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ (ﷺ)

'Amr set off with his army towards Alexandria, and on the way there was some fighting between him and the people of that land, in which the Muslims were victorious. It may be noted that 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ was wounded many times in his battles with the people of al-Kiryoon. A messenger came to him from his father to ask him about his wounds and 'Abdullâh said in verse:

"I say to myself when the pain grows intense,
Be patient, for soon you will be praised or blamed."

The messenger went back to 'Amr and told him what he had said. 'Amr said: "He is truly my son."[158]

This was an attitude of patience and forbearance on the part of 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ, who was well known for his knowledge and worship, which he combined with courage and patience in the face of hardship.[159]

3.6. A house that was built for the caliph in Egypt

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ sent word to 'Umar, telling him: "We have built a house for you next to the *Jâmi'* mosque." 'Umar wrote back

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[157] Pp. cit., 12/351.

[158] *Futooḥ Miṣr*, p. 57.

[159] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 12/330.

saying: "I am a man who lives in the Ḥijâz. Why would I have a house in Egypt?" and he commanded him to make it into a marketplace for the Muslims.[160]

This is indicative of the restraint of the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ), and his asceticism with regard to outward worldly matters. If leaders and rulers put themselves above the matters of this world and its transient pleasures, then it is more appropriate that those who are below them should also shun such things.[161]

3.7. The claim that the Muslims burnt the library of Alexandria

Dr. 'Abdur-Raḥeem Muhammad 'Abdul-Ḥameed said: "We did not find any text or indication that 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ burned the library of Alexandria. All there is, is a text by Ibn al-Qafṭi, quoting from Ibn al-'Abari (d. 685 A.H./1286 C.E.) which says: "Yaḥya al-Naḥawi — who was from Alexandria and lived until the city of Alexandria was conquered by 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ — went to see 'Amr. He was known for his knowledge, so 'Amr honoured him and heard from him philosophical words with which the Arabs were not familiar." Ibn al-Qafṭi completed the story by saying: " 'Amr said to him, 'What do you want from us?' He said, 'The books of wisdom that are in the royal stores'... forty-five thousand, one hundred and twenty volumes. 'Amr thought that what Yaḥya had mentioned was too much, and he said, 'I cannot issue such an order without asking permission from the caliph.' He wrote to 'Umar and told him what Yaḥya had said, and 'Umar wrote back, saying: 'As for the books which you have mentioned, if what is in them is in accordance with

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[160] *Futooḥ Miṣr*, p. 69.

[161] *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 12/356.

the Book of Allah, then we should be content with the Book of Allah. If what is in them is contrary to the Book of Allah, then we have no need of them. So go ahead and destroy them.' 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ started distributing the books to the bath-houses of Alexandria, where they were burned in the stoves, and I was told the number of bath-houses at that time, but I forgot. They said that it took six months to burn them all, so listen to what happened and be amazed."[162]

But this story of the book-burning was narrated before Ibn al-Qafṭi and before Ibn al-'Abari. 'Abdul-Laṭeef al-Baghdâdi (d. 649 A.H./1231 C.E.) said: "It was a house of knowledge that was built by Alexander when he built the city, in which were stored the books that were burned by 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ with the permission of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ)."[163]

But if we study these reports, we must note the following points:

1. There is no connection between these three reports or between their narrators, even though they lived in a similar time frame.

2. There is no isnad to which these reports can be attributed; rather they reflect assumptions that are made by their authors.

3. These reports were written at a time that was distant from the conquest of Egypt and the time of 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ. So we may say with all certainty that this story is obviously fabricated and the following criticisms may be made:

4. The story of the burning of the library of Alexandria is not mentioned by those who wrote the history of Egypt and its conquest, who lived many centuries before those who wrote this story.

5. This story is not mentioned by al-Wâqidi, aṭ-Ṭabari, Ibn al-Atheer or Ibn Khaldoon, let alone Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam, and it is not

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[162] *'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ al-Qâ'id wa as-Siyâsi*, p. 133.

[163] Ibid, p. 134.

mentioned by Yaqoot al-Ḥamawi in his description of Alexandria.

6. This story can be traced back to the time of the Crusades, through al-Baghdadi, who may have fabricated it under pressure, or it may have been fabricated later on and attributed to him.

7. If this so-called library ever existed, then we may say that the Byzantines who left Alexandria could have taken it with them, and they probably did do that.

8. 'Amr could have thrown the books into the sea within a very short time, instead of burning them, which supposedly took six months. This points to the purpose behind the fabrication of this story. We can say without any hesitation that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ are innocent of what has been attributed to them in this fabricated story, which stems from the imaginations of people who love to exaggerate, so they imagined things that did not happen.[164]

3.8. The meeting between 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ and the Patriarch Binyâmeen

The historian Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam said: "In Alexandria there was a Coptic bishop called Abu Binyâmeen, who had fled into the desert because of the religious persecution that the Copts were suffering at the hands of the Christian Byzantines. When he heard that 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ had come to Egypt, he wrote to the Copts, telling them that the Byzantines no longer had a hold on power and their dominion had come to an end, and he told them to welcome 'Amr. It was said that the Copts who were in al-Farma became helpers of 'Amr on that day.[165] According to a report by the Coptic historian

[164] *'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ al-Qâ'id wa as-Siyâsi*, p. 134.

[165] *Futooḥ Miṣr wa Akhbâruha*, Pp. 73, 74.

Sawirus ibn al-Muqanna, Sanutius, one of the Coptic leaders at that time, who was in charge of church affairs during the absence of the Patriarch Binyameen, told 'Amr where the Patriarch Binyâmeen was, and that he had fled from the Byzantines, fearing them. 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ wrote a letter to his agents in Egypt, telling them where Binyâmeen, the Patriarch of the Christian Copts, was, and that he had a covenant and a promise of protection and safety from Allah, so let him come in safety and tend to the affairs of his church and his people. When the bishop Binyâmeen heard of that, he returned to Alexandria with great joy, after having been absent for thirteen years. When he appeared, the people and the entire city rejoiced at his coming. When 'Amr learned of his arrival, he ordered that he be brought to him with full honour and respect, and when he saw him, he honoured him and said to his companions: "In all the cities that we have taken possession of, up till now I have not seen a man like this." The Patriarch Binyâmeen was very handsome and well spoken, with a tranquil and dignified manner. Then 'Amr turned to him and said: "Take care of all your churches and men; they are all under your control and you may manage their affairs."

Professor ash-Sharqâwi commented on this meeting by saying: " 'Amr kept the Patriarch Binyâmeen close to him until he became one of his dearest friends, and the Arabs who had conquered Egypt began to feel at ease. Their governor 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ addressed them on the occasion of the first *Jumu'ah* prayers in al-Fusṭâṭ and said, 'Treat the Copts who are your neighbours well, for you owe them protection and are connected to them by marriage. So refrain from harming them, refrain from looking at their womenfolk and lower your gaze.' "[166]

[166] *Al-Fârooq*, p. 247.

4. Important Lessons from the Conquests of 'Umar

4.1. The nature of the Islamic conquests

Some Orientalist and Christian historians have attempted to misrepresent the Islamic conquests at the time of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. They claimed that the conquests were religious wars and said that the Muslims were people of faith but they were fanatics who subjugated the people and made them accept their principles by means of force and indulging in ruthless bloodshed. They claim that they carried the Qur'an in one hand and the sword in the other.[167] Among those who focused on this idea were Sidio, Muir and Nipur. Muir quotes Nipur as saying: "For the survival of Islam, it was essential that it continue with its aggressive plans and enforce by the sword its demand that all people enter Islam, or at least spread its influence internationally. But it is inevitable for any religion that its followers will prefer war at some stage, and this was the case with Islam."

But the claim that the Muslims aimed to spread their faith by force or that they were more aggressive than others, is a claim that must be completely rejected.[168] Some Orientalists refuted this accusation and described the Islamic conquests as being based on a sublime attitude. Von Kremer says: "In their wars, the Muslim Arabs embodied good attitudes. The Prophet (ﷺ) forbade them to kill monks, women, children and the blind or handicapped, as he also forbade them to destroy crops or cut down trees. The Muslims

[167] *Târeekh al-'Arab al-'Âm* by Sidio, p. 133.

[168] *Fatḥ Miṣr bayna ar-Ru'yah al-Islâmiyah wa ar-Ru'yah an-Naṣrâniyah*, p. 126.

followed these instructions to the letter in their wars. They did not violate any sanctuary or destroy any crops. The Byzantines used to shoot poisoned arrows at them, but they did not respond in kind against their enemy. Pillaging towns and setting fire to them was the normal practice of the Byzantine army, whether it was advancing or retreating, but the Muslims adhered to their ideals and did not try to do any of these things."[169]

Rosenthal said: "The Islamic state expanded into other lands, calling others to the faith, and engaging in debate with other intellectual movements that were in existence. But above all, the advance of Islam demolished the ancient barriers of language and custom, and provided a rare opportunity to all peoples and civilizations to start a new intellectual life that was based on absolute equality, in a spirit of free competition."[170]

The historical reality shows that the Muslims did not force anyone to embrace Islam, because they adhered to the words of Allah:

﴾There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in *Ṭâghoot* [false goods, idols, etc.] and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.﴿ *(Qur'an 2: 256)*

The reason why people converted to Islam was what they saw in Islam itself, which was a great blessing, and what they saw in the Muslims who embodied Islamic attitudes and adhered to the teachings, commands and prohibitions of the faith, and what they saw in the commanders and troops who called others by means of their deeds and actions. The attitude of the soldiers was the noblest

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[169] *Al-Islâm wa Ḥarakat at-Târeekh* by Anwâr al-Jundi, p. 83.

[170] *'Ilm at-Târeekh 'inda al-Muslimeen*, translated [into Arabic] by Ṣâliḥ Aḥmad al-'Ali, p. 46.

attitude ever known in the history of the world. The caliphs and commanders urged their troops to seek the help of Allah and to fear Him, to give precedence to the Hereafter over this world, to be sincere in jihad, to seek the pleasure of Allah in whatever they did, and to keep away from sin. They had a strong desire to save nations and individuals from servitude to other people so that they might become slaves of Allah, and to bring them out of the constrictions of this world to the vastness of the Hereafter. The Muslim leaders marched at the head of their armies, receiving the first blows in the battles of jihad, and many of them were martyred. And the leaders used to march at the back of the army at times of safety, so as to show kindness to them, carry burdens and help the weak. The leaders were, first and foremost, *dâ'iyahs* who implemented the principles of Islamic warfare in full. Indeed, the Muslims fought in jihad for the sake of Allah and did not wage war as other states used to do.[171]

4.2. 'Umar's method of selecting commanders for the army

'Umar had a distinct method of selecting leaders for the conquest. He stipulated a number of conditions and guidelines for choosing commanders for his troops, which were as follows:

4.2.1. They should be pious and righteous, with knowledge of Islamic rulings

He used to say, "Whoever appoints an evildoer knowing that he is an evildoer, is just like him."[172] When he sent word to Sa'eed

[171] *Fatḥ Miṣr* by Dr. Ibraheem al-Mutanâwi, p. 127.

[172] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 100, quoting from *Seerat 'Umar*, by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 67.

ibn 'Âmir, appointing him as governor in some part of Syria, Sa'eed refused the post. 'Umar said: "No, by the One in Whose hand is my soul, do not lay all the burden on my shoulders and sit in your houses."[173]

4.2.2. The commander should be known for deliberation and caution

When 'Umar appointed Abu 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi, he said to him: "Nothing prevented me from appointing Sulayṭ except the fact that he rushed to fight, and rushing to fight may lead to loss, except when it is based on sound calculation. By Allah, were it not for his haste, I would have appointed him, but nothing is right in war except deliberation."[174]

4.2.3. He should be daring and brave, and skilled in archery

When 'Umar wanted to appoint a leader for the Muslim armies to conquer Nahawand[175], he consulted the people and they said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, you know more about the people of Iraq and your troops have come to you, and you have seen them and spoken to them." He said, "By Allah, I shall appoint over them a man who will be the most courageous in battle when they meet the enemy tomorrow." They asked, "Who is it, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen?*" He said, "An-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin al-Muzani." They said, "He is able for it."[176]

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[173] *Mawsoo'at Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 100, quoting from *Musannaf 'Abdur-Razzâq*, 11/348.

[174] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/266.

[175] Nahawand: A Persian city, close to Ḥamadhân.

[176] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/109.

4.2.4. He should be intelligent and wise

'Umar (ﷺ) said: "Your right over me is that I should never send you on a fatal mission or keep you at the border posts for too long."[177] When 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ and his troops faced the Byzantines in the battle of Ajnadeen, the Byzantine commander al-Arṭaboon was the smartest of the Byzantines, a man of deep insight and cunning, who had assembled a huge army in Aeelia' and Ramlah. 'Amr wrote to 'Umar with the news, and when his letter arrived, 'Umar said: "We have sent the Arṭaboon of the Arabs against the Arṭaboon of the Byzantines. Let us see how things will turn out."[178] When 'Amr wanted to gather information about al-Arṭaboon and his army, so that he could devise a wise plan of attack and defeat him, Ibn al-'Âṣ entered the camp of the Byzantine leader and was almost killed, but Allah saved him. 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ tricked al-Arṭaboon, and when news of that reached 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb he said: " 'Amr has defeated him, what a smart man 'Amr is!"[179]

4.2.5. The commander should be smart and eloquent, with military insight and experience

The author of *al-Mughni* (Ibn Qudâmah al-Ḥanbali) said, when speaking of military commanders: "(The commander should be) wise, chivalrous, with knowledge of war and insight into the enemy's next move. He should be trustworthy, kind and sincere towards the Muslims."[180] Hence 'Umar chose Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ to lead the army in Iraq after consulting the people.

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177 *Mawsoo'ah Fiqh 'Umar*, p. 109.

178 *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/431.

179 Ibid, 4/432.

180 *Al-Mughni* by Ibn Qudâmah, 8/352.

4.2.6. He should be keen to do the job

Part of 'Umar's plan was not to appoint any man to do a job that he did not want to do and concerning which he had no conviction, unless he had no other choice, so that the job would be done in a proficient manner. On one occasion he urged the people to fight the Persians, but no one stood up (to volunteer). The next day, he repeated his plea, and no one stood up. On the third day he repeated his plea, and again no one stood up. When the fourth day came, the first one to volunteer was Abu 'Ubayd ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi, then the people followed his lead. He appointed Abu 'Ubayd in charge of them, as he was qualified for that position even though he was not a *Ṣaḥâbi*. It was said to 'Umar: "Why didn't you appoint a man from among the *Ṣaḥâbah* in charge of them?" He said, "I have appointed over them the one who responded first."[181] These qualities were embodied in Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ, 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ and many others.

4.3. The rights of Allah, the leaders and troops, as derived from the letters of 'Umar

4.3.1. The rights of Allah

In his letters and exhortations, 'Umar reminded his commanders and troops of the importance of upholding the rights of Allah, among the most important of which are:

Enduring and being more patient than the enemy

Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty says:

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[181] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/26.

﴾O' you who believe! Endure and be more patient [than your enemy], and guard your territory by stationing army units permanently at the places from where the enemy can attack you, and fear Allah, so that you may be successful.﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 200)*

When he sent Sa'd ibn Abi al-Waqqâṣ to Iraq, he reminded him of the importance of patience and said: "Remember that every good action requires a certain quality. Good actions require patience in bearing whatever befalls you or strikes you. If you have patience then you will fear Allah."[182] He also wrote to 'Ubaydah ibn Abi al-Jarrâḥ when he was in Syria, saying: "Allah praised people for their patience, as He said:

﴾And many a Prophet [i.e. many from amongst the Prophets] fought [in Allah's Cause] and along with him [fought] large bands of religious learned men. But they never lost heart for that which did befall them in Allah's way, nor did they weaken nor degrade themselves. And Allah loves *aṣ-Ṣâbiroon* [the patient]. And they said nothing but, 'Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and our transgressions [in keeping our duties to You], establish our feet firmly, and give us victory over the disbelieving folk. So Allah gave them the reward of this world, and the excellent reward of the Hereafter. And Allah loves *al-Muḥsinoon* [the good-doers].'﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 146-148)*

The reward of this world is booty and conquest, and the reward of the Hereafter is forgiveness and Paradise." He read this letter out to the people and told them to fight for the sake of Allah and to be patient so that Allah might give them the reward of this world and the excellent reward of the Hereafter.[183]

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[182] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/306.

[183] *Târeekh Futooḥ ash-Shâm*, p. 183.

Their intention when fighting should be to support the religion of Allah

'Umar (ﷺ) understood the words of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ): «"Whoever fights so that the word of Allah may be supreme is (fighting) for the sake of Allah."»[184] So we see that his life, his advice and his letters were governed by this important concept.

Fulfilling the trust

Allah, the All-Compassionate, All-Merciful says:

﴾It is not for any Prophet to take illegally a part of the booty [*Ghulool*], and whosoever deceives his companions as regards the booty, he shall bring forth on the Day of Resurrection that which he took [illegally]. Then every person shall be paid in full what he has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.﴿ *(Qur'an 3: 161)*

Among 'Umar's advice to his commanders and troops was not to steal from the war booty before it was distributed, as he said: "When you meet the enemy, do not flee, and when you seize booty, do not steal from it."[185]

No room for favouritism in supporting the religion of Allah

One of the most famous sayings of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) concerning favouritism is: "Whoever appoints a man because of favouritism or blood ties, and does not appoint him for any other reason, has betrayed Allah and His Messenger, and whoever appoints an evildoer knowing that he is an evildoer, is just like him."[186]

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[184] Bukhari, hadith no. 2655.

[185] *Al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 85.

[186] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah fee ad-Dawlat al-Islâmiyah*, 1/66.

4.3.2. The rights of the commander

'Umar stated in his letters and commands the rights of the commander, which include the following:

Constant obedience

When 'Umar sent Abu 'Ubayd ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi to Iraq as the head of the army, he sent with him Salamah ibn Aslam al-Khazraji and Sulayṭ ibn Qays al-Anṣâri (may Allah be pleased with them both), and commanded him not to take any decision without consulting them. He told him that they were from among the people of Badr. Then Abu 'Ubayd fought the Persians in the battle of the bridge. Sulayṭ had advised him not to destroy the bridge and not to cross over to where the Persians were, but he did not pay attention to him, which led to the defeat of the Muslim troops. Sulayṭ said: "Were it not that I do not like to be disobedient, I would have told the people to disobey him, but I listen and I obey."[187]

They should entrust their affairs to those charged with authority among them

Allah, the All-Powerful says:

﴾When there comes to them some matter touching [public] safety or fear, they make it known [among the people]; if only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them [directly]. Had it not been for the Grace and Mercy of Allah upon you, you would have followed *Shayṭân* [Satan], save a few of you.﴿ *(Qur'an 4: 83)*

Allah made the people's entrusting their affairs to those charged with authority among them one of the means of reaching the

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[187] *Murooj adh-Dhahab,* 2/315, 316.

right decision. If they think that a better way is hidden from their leader, they should point it out to him and advise him to follow it. Hence consultation is recommended in order to find the correct way.[188] 'Umar appointed a single leader for the troops so that they might entrust their affairs to him, and so that they would not have conflicting points of view that might result in division.[189]

In the year in which 'Umar sent the Muslim armies to Nahawand and commanded them to gather there, the armies consisted of the troops from Madeenah, both *Muhâjiroon* and Anṣâr, under the leadership of 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ), the troops of Baṣrah under the leadership of Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari (ﷺ), and the troops of Koofa under the leadership of Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân (ﷺ). After they had gathered, 'Umar (ﷺ) wrote to them saying: "When you meet, your commander is an-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin al-Muzani."[190]

Hastening to obey his commands

During the caliphate of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ), the first thing he did was urge the people to fight the Persians. He started calling them for three days, but no one responded. On the fourth day, the first one to respond was Abu 'Ubayd ibn Mas'ood ath-Thaqafi, which led 'Umar to appoint him in charge of that mission, even though there were Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) there, because he had hastened to answer the call.[191]

When 'Umar sent 'Utbah ibn Ghazwân to Baṣra, he said to him, advising and reminding him: "Fear Allah with regard to what

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[188] *Al-Aḥkâm as-Sulṭâniyah*, p. 48.

[189] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah fee ad-Dawlah al-Islâmiyah Nash'atuha wa Taṭawwuruha*, 1/100.

[190] Ibid.

[191] Ibid, 1/113.

you have been appointed to do, and beware of being inclined towards arrogance that would spoil your bond with your brothers. You were a Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ); you have been honoured after being humiliated, and you have become strong after being weak, and now you have become a commander with authority and a leader who is obeyed; when you speak you are listened to and when you issue orders you are obeyed. What a blessing that is, provided that you do not feel yourself to be more than you are and do not look down on others."[192]

Not arguing about the distribution of booty

Concerning the distribution of booty, one of the things that 'Umar said was: "O' Allah, I call upon You to bear witness over the governors of the regions, for I have only sent them to teach the people their religion and the Sunnah of their Prophet, to divide the *fay'* and to be fair to them. Whoever is confused about any matter should refer to me."[193]

During the conquest of al-Ablah[194], when the booty was shared out among the troops, the share of one of them was a pot of copper. When he took possession of it, he realized that it was made of gold. The other soldiers noticed that and complained to the commander.[195] He did not know what to do, so he wrote to 'Umar (ﷺ), telling him about that. The reply came back: "If he insists that he did not know that it was gold until after he took possession of it, and he swears to that effect, then give it to him. If he refuses (to swear) then divide it among the Muslims." He swore the oath and it was given to him.[196] When the booty was gathered in the battle of

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[192] Op. cit., 1/114.

[193] *Al-Kharâj* by Abu Yoosuf, p. 50.

[194] Al-Ablah: A city on the banks of the Tigris.

[195] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/120.

[196] *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 128.

Jaloola', Jareer ibn 'Abdullâh al-Bajali said that one-quarter of it was for him and his people. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) wrote to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb about that, and 'Umar said: "Jareer has spoken the truth. I said to him that if he thinks that he and his people fought in return for the share of those whose hearts are to be softened, then give them their share, but if they fought for the sake of Allah and His religion, seeking that which is with Him, then they are Muslims, with the same rights and duties as other Muslims." When the letter came to Sa'd he told Jareer about that, and Jareer said: "The *Ameer al-Mu'mineen* has spoken the truth. We have no need of the one-quarter, rather we are among the Muslims."

4.3.3. The rights of the troops

In his letters and words of advice, 'Umar explained the rights of the troops, which included the following:

Inspecting the troops and checking on them

It is narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb said: "I draw up plans to prepare my army when I am in a state of prayer." This is because 'Umar was enjoined, as caliph, to be involved in jihad, so he was the commander of jihad, so in that regard he was like one who offers the fear prayer whilst facing the enemy.[197] When he appointed commanders, before he sent them out he would inspect them and advise them. Among the things that he used to say to them was, 'Wear your *izârs* and *rida's*, wear shoes and dress properly; engage in target practice and learn to ride horses well. Follow the way of the Arabs and avoid the luxurious styles of the non-Arabs.' You will continue to be strong so long as you practice horseback riding and archery."[198]

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[197] *Al-Fatâwa*, 22/609.

[198] *Nihâyat al-Arb*, 6/168.

This shows us the extent of 'Umar's keenness to prepare his army well and show their strength. His commanders followed his example by lining up their troops and inspecting them, and making a show of strength before the enemy, whether that was in battle or during the preparations for battle. 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ would address his troops in Egypt during *Jumu'ah* prayers and urge them to fatten their mounts; he warned them that they would not be given their salary if they did not do that. He said: "I do not want to hear that a man has fattened his own body and left his horse lean. Remember that I am going to inspect the horses as I inspect the men. Whoever makes his horse lean with no reason, I will deduct from his salary accordingly."[199]

When Mu'âwiyah met 'Umar upon his arrival in Syria, 'Umar saw him living like a king. He denounced him for that and asked: "Are you behaving like Chosroes, O' Mu'âwiyah?" He said, "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen,* we are on the frontier, facing the enemy, and we need to compete with them in the adornment of war and jihad." 'Umar remained silent and did not tell him that he was wrong, as the purpose explained to him had to do with supporting the truth and the faith.[200]

Kindness towards the troops during the march

'Umar wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) saying: "Be kind to the Muslims during their march, and do not force them to march to the point of exhaustion. Strive to make stops in suitable places, so that they may reach the enemy without losing any of their strength. For they are headed towards an enemy who is settled, whose troops and horses are well rested. Give them one day and one night off every week, so that they may rest and revitalize themselves, and put down

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[199] *Futooḥ Miṣr* by Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam, p. 141.

[200] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah,* 1/137, quoting from *al-Muqaddimah.*

their weapons and equipment. Make your stops in places that are far away from the cities with which you have peace treaties."[201]

When 'Umar sent reinforcements to the troops in Syria, he gave them mounts and provisions, and appointed Sa'eed ibn 'Âmir in charge of them. When they were about to set off, 'Umar said: "Wait a minute, until I tell you something." Then 'Umar went towards the army on foot, and said to him, "O' Sa'eed, I have appointed you over this army, but you are not the best of them, unless you fear Allah. When you march, be as kind to them as you can; do not impugn their honour or look down on the young ones among them. Do not show favouritism to the strong among them, and do not lead them through caves. Take them through the plains and do not stop on any major road. I entrust you and the Muslims with you to the care of Allah."[202]

Checking on them before they head out

'Umar used to inspect the troops before they headed out and advise them to adopt a noble attitude and uphold noble values. He ordered Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ to fulfil promises made to the enemy if they requested safe passage, and not to betray them. He told him that mistakenly betraying a man would be a cause of doom and weakness for him and a source of strength for the enemy, and he warned him against becoming a source of shame and weakness for the Muslims.[203]

Not trying to deal with one who opposes him at the time of meeting the enemy, lest that lead to division and defeat

Among the advice that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) gave to his commanders was the following: "The leader of an army or a

[201] *Nihâyat al-Arb*, 6/169.

[202] *Târeekh Futooḥ ash-Shâm*, p. 186 by al-Azdi.

[203] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/179; *aṭ-Ṭabari*, 3/397.

campaign should not give anyone the *ḥadd* punishment of lashes until the battle is over, lest the *Shayṭân* cause him to join the *kuffâr*."[204]

When 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) sent Salmân ibn Rabee'ah al-Bâhili at the head of an army, he sent with him 'Amr ibn Ma'diyakrib and Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi. Some argument arose between 'Amr ibn Ma'diyakrib and Salmân ibn Rabee'ah, and news of that reached 'Umar (ﷺ). 'Umar wrote to him saying, "I have heard what you did to 'Amr, and that was not right. If I was in your position in a situation of war, I would look at 'Amr and Ṭulayḥah and bring them close and listen to them, for they have knowledge and experience of war. Then when you reach the Muslim lands you may regard them as they regard themselves, and draw close to the people of fiqh and Qur'an."[205] And he wrote to 'Amr ibn Ma'diyakrib saying: "I have heard about your arguing with your commander and insulting him. I have heard that you have a sword called aṣ-Ṣamṣâmah. Well I have a sword called al-Muṣammim and I swear by Allah that if I strike you with it, that will be the end of you." When this letter reached 'Amr he said: "By Allah, if he decided to, he would indeed use it."[206]

It is clear from these two texts that 'Umar fully understood how a commander should behave in hostile territory, creating harmony among his troops, especially when they were about to confront the enemy, and he understood that the leader should consult those who have experience of war, and that this does not mean that the relationship of love between them should end when they return to the territory where there is peace.

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[204] *Târeekh al-Khulafa'* by as-Suyooṭi, p. 131.

[205] *Al-Awâ'il* by al-'Askari, 2/45.

[206] Ibid.

During the conquest of ar-Râha[207], which was achieved at the hand of 'Iyâḍ ibn Ghanam, reinforcements came to him from Syria, led by Bisr ibn Abi Arta'ah al-'Âmiri, sent by Yazeed ibn Abi Sufiyân on the instruction of 'Umar (ﷺ). A dispute arose between them whilst they were in enemy territory. 'Iyâḍ had no need for the reinforcements, so he asked him to go back to Syria. 'Umar (ﷺ) wrote to 'Iyâḍ asking him to explain the reason why he had sent them back, especially since they had only come to help him and to give the impression to the enemy that reinforcements were coming one after another, so as to weaken their resolve and hasten their submission. 'Iyâḍ replied, "I was afraid that there might be rebellion and disunity among the troops, and because I had no need for reinforcements, I apologized to him and told him to go back. This is the reason why I sent him back."[208] 'Umar approved of that and prayed for him, especially as they were facing the enemy, so as to avoid creating division and disputes that would lead to failure.[209]

Keeping watch lest the enemy catch them unawares whilst stopping and when on the march

'Umar was very concerned with the issue of keeping watch, hence he ordered his commanders to be very careful lest the enemy attack them or catch them unawares. He asked them to appoint guards whenever they stopped and when they were on the move. He also advised them to send scouts and spies in all directions when reaching the land of the enemy, so that they would acquire full knowledge of the enemy's land and their intentions. He wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ saying: "When you enter the land of the enemy, send scouts between you and them, and be fully aware of their situation.

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[207] Ar-Râha: A city in al-Jazeerah region, between Mosul and Syria.

[208] *Futooḥ ash-Shâm* by Ibn A'tham, 1/253-255.

[209] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/188.

You should have with you Arabs and local people whom you trust and know to be sincere, for information brought by a liar will be of no benefit to you, even if some of what he says is true. A traitor is a spy against you, not for you. When you approach the enemy's land, you should send out many scouts and small detachments who can cut off the enemy's reinforcements and supply lines, and find their weak points. Choose as scouts people who are wise and tough from among your companions, and give them fast horses, so that if they meet the enemy, the first impression will be one of strength."[210]

From this valuable advice, it is clear to us that the caliph 'Umar (ﷺ) was not concerned only with sending spies against the enemy, rather he also used spies as a means of keeping an eye on the administrative affairs of the Muslim army by watching his governors, agents, commanders and troops, so that he would know what was happening among them and how the military campaign was being run. He had spies in every army and camp who sent him reports about what was happening.[211]

'Umayr ibn Sa'd al-Anṣâri complained to the caliph 'Umar; when he came to him among a group of people from Syria, he said: "O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, between us and the Byzantines there is a city called 'Arabsoos. Its people tell our enemies all about our weak points, but they do not tell us anything about their weak points." 'Umar said to him: "When you reach it, give its people the choice between being given two sheep for every sheep, two camels for every camel, two of everything in return for one (as an incitement to leave). If they accept that, then give it to them (and let them leave), then destroy the city. If they refuse, then warn them and give them one year's respite, then destroy it."[212] When 'Umayr ibn Sa'd came to

[210] *Nihâyat al-Arb*, 6/169.

[211] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/396.

[212] *Futooḥ al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, 1/185.

them, he gave them this choice, but they refused, so he gave them one year's respite, then he destroyed the city.[213]

Choosing the place to fight the enemy

'Umar advised Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ not to engage in fighting until he had familiarized himself thoroughly with the lie of the land where the battle was to take place, including water sources and green areas for grazing the animals, and so on.[214] He also wrote to him before al-Qâdisiyah, telling him to stay close to their own land, because they knew its routes better than the enemy, and in the event of a defeat they would be able to withdraw and save themselves from being killed, and the enemy would not be able to catch up with them because they would be too afraid to follow them and they would not know the routes in that land.[215]

In addition to that, 'Umar appointed Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, Salmân al-Fârisi and Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân to go ahead of the army and choose the place for the battle and for the troops to stay.

'Umar (ﷺ) distributed administrative tasks among his commanders[216], and stipulated that when selecting a site for their troops to camp, it should not be cut off from the supreme headquarters by any body of water, because of the headquarters' central role in planning and sending reinforcements and supplies.[217] 'Umar also wrote to Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ saying: "Do not let them camp in a place before you go and check it out for them and find out how it is."[218]

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[213] Op. cit., 1/185; *al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/395.

[214] *Nihâyat al-Arb*, 6/170; *al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/205.

[215] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/205.

[216] Ibid, 1/206.

[217] Ibid.

[218] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/207, quoting from *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 3/434.

Preparing what the troops need of supplies and fodder

'Umar used to send the Muslim troops to Iraq from Madeenah with supplies of sheep and camels for slaughter.[219] He also supplied them with mounts from the *ḥima* of an-Naqee' and ar-Rabdhah[220] which were to be used for jihad for the sake of Allah. From every region according to need he would take horses from the surplus wealth of the people, as a precaution to be ready for war. In Koofa there were four thousand such horses, and a similar number in Baṣra, and horses were kept in every region according to need.[221] When 'Umar came to Syria to conclude a peace treaty with the people of Jerusalem, he established a department to organize supplies for the army, which was known as al-Ahra'. 'Amr ibn 'Absah was the first one who was appointed in charge of supplies for the armies.[222]

Encouraging them to fight

'Umar wrote to Abu 'Ubaydah, encouraging him to fight in jihad, saying: "In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. From the slave of Allah 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, the Commander of the Faithful, to Abu 'Ubaydah 'Âmir ibn al-Jarrâḥ. Peace be upon you. I praise Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, openly and in secret, and I warn you against disobeying Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. I warn you and I forbid you to be among those of whom Allah says,

﴾Say, 'If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, and the dwellings in which you delight are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger, and striving hard and fighting in

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[219] *Futooḥ al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, 2/314.

[220] Ar-Rabdhah - located three days' distance from Madeenah.

[221] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/217.

[222] Ibid.

His Cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision [torment]. And Allah guides not the people who are *al-Fâsiqoon* [the rebellious, disobedient to Allah].'﴾ *(Qur'an 9: 24)*

May Allah send blessings upon the Seal of the Prophets and the leader of the Messengers. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds."[223]

When this letter reached Abu 'Ubaydah, he read it out to the Muslims, and they realized that the caliph was encouraging them to fight. There was no one among the Muslims who did not weep at the letter of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb.

'Umar also wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ and the troops who were with him in Iraq, urging them to fight and commanding them to adhere to noble virtues, and forbidding them to commit sin.[224] It was also part of the commander's role at the time of 'Umar to encourage the troops to fight.[225]

Reminding them of the reward of Allah and the virtue of martyrdom

At the time of 'Umar, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ stood up in al-Qâdisyah and reminded his troops of the reward of Allah, may He be exalted, and what He had prepared for them in the Hereafter of delight. He encouraged them to wage jihad and told them of what Allah has promised His Prophet of divine support and victory of Islam. He told them of the spoils, booty and land that would soon be theirs, and he ordered the readers to recite the *Soorah* of jihad (*Soorah al-Anfâl*).[226]

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[223] *Futooḥ ash-Shâm* by al-Wâqidi, 1/117.

[224] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/239.

[225] Ibid.

[226] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/356.

Similarly, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ stood and addressed the troops in Syria, reminding them of the reward and blessings of Allah and telling them that jihad was better for them than this world and everything in it.[227]

And it is well known that 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ said to the army in Palestine: "Whoever is killed as a martyr and whoever lives will be blessed." He commanded his troops to recite Qur'an and urged them to be patient and steadfast, and he encouraged them to seek the reward of Allah and His Paradise.[228]

Obliging them to fulfil the duties enjoined by Allah

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) wrote to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ and the troops who were with him, offering the following advice: "I urge you and the troops who are with you to fear Allah in all circumstances, for fear of Allah is the best means of preparation to face the enemy and the best plan at times of war. I command you and those who are with you to be more cautious of sin than of your enemy, for the sins of an army are more alarming for them than their enemy, and the Muslims are only granted divine help because of their enemy's disobedience towards Allah."[229]

He should forbid them to be distracted by trade, agriculture and so on

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) ordered calls to go out to the commanders of his troops and inform them that their salary would be ongoing and provisions would be supplied to their families, and to tell them not to engage in agriculture; he even punished those who did not obey these orders.[230] All of that was because 'Umar (ﷺ) was

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[227] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/243.

[228] *Futooḥ ash-Shâm*, 1/18, 20.

[229] *Al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by Muhammad Rasheed Riḍa, p. 119.

[230] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/256.

keen to make his troops focus completely on jihad and spreading Islam, and not let them become attached to the land that they farmed so that they became preoccupied with it. Thus 'Umar (ﷺ) was able to develop an army that was devoted to fighting and was ready for action whenever needed, and he guaranteed that they would not be scattered to gather fruits and engage in other agricultural tasks such as harvesting, tilling and marketing.[231]

4.4. His concern with the borders of the state

'Umar worried about the Muslims and the borders of the Islamic state, which was expanding. He was reluctant to fight the Byzantines and when he mentioned them he said: "By Allah, I wish that there was a line of burning coals between us and them; whatever was within that line would be ours and whatever lay beyond it would belong to the Byzantines."[232] He said the same thing concerning the border between the Islamic state and Persia: "I wish that between as-Sawâd and the mountains there was a barrier, so that they could not reach us and we could not reach them. The countryside of as-Sawâd is sufficient for us, and I prefer the safety of the Muslims to the spoils of war."[233]

He ordered that military bases be set up, that would play a multi-faceted role; we have referred to some of them above. These would also serve as control centres in strategic locations near the border between them and the conquered lands, to repel any aggression from without, as well as being centres for the assembling of troops and for the spread of Islam. Foremost among these centres

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[231] Op. cit., 1/257.

[232] *Târeekh al-Ya'qoobi*, 2/155.

[233] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, quoting from *al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/352.

were the cities of Baṣra and Koofa, which faced the Persian state, and al-Fusṭâṭ in Egypt.[234] Other posts on the coasts of Egypt and Syria were set up to repel Byzantine attacks by sea. He later established four armies which were known as the army of Homs, the army of Damascus, the army of Jordan and the army of Palestine. The soldiers became known by the army in which they served, and the army name would be attached to their own names, so that the commanders could tell them apart and so as to make administrative matters run more smoothly, both during military missions and when paying the troops.[235]

This was in addition to the camps and fortifications on the borders from which the enemy had been expelled and which had been taken over by the Muslims who turned them into military bases and installed their troops there to protect the borders of the Muslim state.[236]

Every time the Muslims advanced, they would set up a border post in the farthest point they reached to guard the border, and they filled the post with soldiers who would stay there; the most qualified leader would be appointed in charge of it.[237]

Among the most important of these procedures that 'Umar adopted in Iraq and the eastern regions were the outposts which were set up between the Muslims and the Persians. When news of the Persians regrouping under the leadership of Yazdagird reached the commander of al-Muthanna ibn Ḥârithah and the Muslims, they wrote to the caliph 'Umar, telling him of that. The reply came: "Get out from amongst the Persians and scatter among the oases that are on

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[234] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/452.

[235] *Futooḥ al-Buldân*, 1/156.

[236] *Târeekh at-Tamaddun*, by Jorji Zaydân, 1/179.

[237] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/453.

the border between your land and theirs." Al-Muthanna carried out this order.[238]

Before al-Qâdisiyah, 'Umar (ﷺ) gave Sa'd this advice: "When you reach al-Qâdisiyah, let your outposts be at the edges of it."[239] In Jaloola', 'Umar wrote to Sa'd saying: "If Allah defeats the two armies — the army of Mahrân and the army of al-Anṭâq — let al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr advance to the border post of Ḥulwân with the Muslim troops, in order to protect the area from enemy advancement, and to protect his fellow Muslim troops, whether they are on the march or in camp."[240]

Hence the commander Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ (ﷺ) encouraged his troops in Iraq to advance towards the Persians, telling them that the borders and mountain passes were sealed, and saying, "There is nothing to fear behind you, so do not worry about being attacked from the rear."[241]

We may note that these outposts that were set up during the time of 'Umar were only established on the orders of the supreme commander of the military administration, when the caliph 'Umar said to the commanders of the outposts: "Distract the Persians from your brothers, protect your ummah and your land, and stand guard over the border between Persia and al-Ahwaz until you receive further instructions."[242]

The number of posts in Koofa alone at the time of 'Umar was four: the post of Ḥulwân, which was commanded by al-Qa'qâ' ibn 'Amr at-Tameemi, the post of Masbadhân, which was commanded

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[238] Op. cit.

[239] Ibid.

[240] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/454, quoting from aṭ-Ṭabari.

[241] Ibid.

[242] Ibid.

by Ḍirâr ibn al-Khaṭṭâb al-Fahri, the post of Qarqeesiya[243], which was commanded by 'Umar ibn Mâlik az-Zuhri, and the post of Moṣul, which was commanded by 'Abdullâh ibn al-Mu'tim al-'Absi. Each of these commanders had a deputy who could run the post if he went out on some mission.

It is worth mentioning that whenever the Muslims built a fortified post or founded a new city, the first thing they did was to establish the mosque, because of the role it played in *da'wah*, teaching and jihad, as is well known.[244]

With regard to the guarding of the border between the Byzantines and the Muslims on the Syrian front at the time of 'Umar (ﷺ), he also paid attention to that from the onset of the Muslim conquests in Syria, when he took many defensive measures to protect the region, such as building watchtowers, establishing border patrols, setting up outposts and fortifying coastal cities, as well as installing fighters in the conquered fortresses. He placed the entire Syrian coast under a single military command. In the year in which 'Umar himself went to Syria to sign the peace treaty with the people of Jerusalem, he checked on some of the Syrian border posts and set up guards and outposts. He travelled from one to another to see what their defensive needs were.[245] Then he went back to Madeenah, but before he left, he addressed the people and said: "I have been appointed over you and I have fulfilled that which Allah appointed me to do for you. *In sha' Allâh* we have shared the *fay'* fairly among you. We have appointed troops for you, and we have made it easy for you by giving you your right to the booty..."[246]

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[243] A city on the Khaboor river, at the point where the Khaboor joins the Euphrates.

[244] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/455.

[245] Ibid, 1/457.

[246] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/40.

When Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ conquered Anṭakiyah (Antioch) on the northern border of Syria, the caliph 'Umar wrote to him saying: "Organize a group of good Muslims to stay in Anṭakiyah and protect the city, and do not withhold provision from them."[247] Abu 'Ubaydah transferred some people from Homs and Ba'lbek to protect the border from any external aggression. He appointed Ḥabeeb ibn Maslamah al-Fahri in charge of the border post, and he took the post of Anṭakiyah as a base for attacks on regions beyond the border. Supplies were sent from this post to the front lines on the Byzantine front, and from it was launched the attack on al-Jarjoomah[248] with whose people a peace treaty was made, stipulating that they would help the Muslims against the Byzantines, and act as spies for them and set up outposts in the Likâm mountains.[249] Similarly, when Abu 'Ubaydah marched to the border post of Bâlis[250], he organized a group of fighters there, and settled it with Syrian Arabs who had become Muslims after the Muslims had come there, to guard the border and protect it against Byzantine attacks.[251]

Other fortifications and defensive methods were adopted by the governor Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân to protect the Muslim borders on the Syrian coast at the end of the reign of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb and at the beginning of the reign of 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân. He built a number of fortresses, such as Aṭarsus[252], Marqiyah[253], Balniyâs[254] and Bayt Saleemah. He also developed the fortresses that had been taken over by the Muslim troops on the Syrian coast, and

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[247] *Futooḥ al-Buldân*, 1/175.

[248] Located in the Likâm mountains on the Syrian border.

[249] *Mu'jam al-Buldân*, 2/123.

[250] Bâlis: A city in Syria between Aleppo and ar-Raqqah.

[251] *Futooḥ al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, 1/224.

[252] A city on the Mediterranean coast.

[253] A citadel near Homs.

[254] A small city and fortress near Homs.

filled them all with troops, allocating land for them and building watchtowers, where he installed guards to keep watch for the enemy. Each watchtower had a beacon to inform others that were nearby, until the news reached the city and other outposts within a short period of time, so that they could hasten towards the front from which the enemy was coming so as to block their advance.[255]

With regard to the defence of the border between the Muslims and the Byzantines on the Egyptian front during the reign of 'Umar (ﷺ), he paid attention to this as he did to the other fronts. He commanded 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ to build al-Fusṭâṭ as a military base and gathering-point for the Muslim troops in the region, and he appointed someone in charge of every tribe. This was the starting-point for the Muslim conquests of North Africa, in addition to its being one of the most important posts for the defence of Egypt, as well as other missions that it undertook. With regard to its location, as with previous bases, 'Umar stipulated that there should be no body of water between it and the central headquarters in the city, so that communications between them could be ongoing and straightforward.[256]

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ used to remind his troops that their stay in Egypt was a kind of guarding the border, as he said: "Remember that you are in a state of guarding the border until the Day of Resurrection, because of the large number of enemies around you who are longing to finish you off and take your land as a source of agriculture, wealth and many blessings." During the period in which the Muslim troops conquered the fortresses and outposts along the Egyptian border, they renovated and repaired them, and made use of them in guarding the border, stationing troops there. Al-'Areesh was

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[255] *Futooḥ al-Buldân*, 1/150-158.

[256] *Futooḥ Miṣr* by Ibn 'Abdul-Ḥakam; *al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/462.

the first outpost in Egypt.[257] 'Umar ordered that outposts be established along the entire Egyptian coast[258], and when 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ conquered Alexandria, he stationed one thousand armed men there to guard it. Their number proved insufficient, which encouraged the Byzantines to come back by sea, and they killed a number of the armed men, whilst others managed to flee. 'Amr came back and conquered the area again, and this time he appointed one-quarter of his army to guard Alexandria. He stationed another quarter to guard the coast, and he stayed in al-Fusṭâṭ with the remaining half.[259]

Every year, 'Umar used to send warriors from Madeenah to be stationed in Alexandria, and he wrote to the governors telling them not to neglect that city and to allocate troops to it, in addition to the troops who were stationed there by 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ.[260] Thus 'Umar's vision of protecting and guarding the land borders on the three fronts of Iraq, Syria and Egypt, was fulfilled.[261] Nor was the matter limited to these defensive means of guarding the Islamic borders. Rather 'Umar also established the system of summer and winter campaigns, whereby troops went out every year on regular patrols in the summer and in the winter, covering all the borders of the Islamic state. Some of the greatest leaders were in charge of these campaigns, such as Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ, Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân, an-Nu'mân ibn Muqrin and many others.[262]

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[257] *Târeekh al-Ya'qoobi*, p. 330.

[258] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/103.

[259] *Al-Bahriyah fee Miṣr al-Islâmiyah wa Athâruha al-Bâqiyah* by Su'âd Mâhir, p. 77.

[260] *Futooḥ Miṣr*, p. 192; *al-Khuṭaṭ* by al-Maqreezi, 1/167.

[261] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/464.

[262] *Futooḥ al-Buldân* by al-Balâdhuri, 1/194, 195.

'Umar increased the supplies and salaries given to those soldiers who were sent to guard the border posts, so as to help them put up with their being far away from their homes, and he also allocated land to them.[263] 'Umar's commanders used to give a share of the booty to the men who were stationed at the outposts, just as they gave shares to their own soldiers, because the outposts were a shield for the Muslims, protecting them against attack from any direction.[264] When the caliph 'Umar was dying, he offered advice to the caliph who came after him saying: "I advise the caliph who comes after me to treat the soldiers in the outposts well, for they are the shield of Islam; they collect money and annoy the enemy. He should not take from them anything except that which is surplus to their needs, with their consent."[265]

4.5. The relationship between 'Umar and the kings

The relationship between 'Umar and the king of Persia was one of war. When he died, his soldiers were still pursuing Yazdagird in his own land and dismantling his kingdom. With regard to his relationship with the king of Byzantium, the peace treaty between the two states was concluded after 'Umar had conquered Syria and al-Jazeerah, and there was an exchange of letters between him and the king of Byzantium. Arab historians state that this correspondence was with Heraclius, but they do not say whether it was with Heraclius I, from whom 'Umar wrested the land of Syria, or with his son Heraclius II, who was known as Heraclius Constantine, because Heraclius I died in 641 C.E. (21 A.H.), and was succeeded by his son

[263] *Al-Fann al-Ḥarbi fee Ṣadr al-Islâm* by 'Abdur-Ra'oof 'Awn, p. 201; *al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 1/465.

[264] *Al-Idârah al-'Askariyah*, 2/465; *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 4/134.

[265] *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, Pp. 219, 220.

in the same year, i.e., two years before the death of 'Umar (ﷺ). Whether the correspondence was with Heraclius I or Heraclius II, messengers used to come and go between them. Umm Kulthoom bint 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib, the wife of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, once sent a gift to the empress, the wife of Heraclius, with an envoy who had come to Madeenah from the king of Byzantium, and the empress sent a gift of precious jewels in return. 'Umar took them and placed them in the *bayt al-mâl*. The books of history state that Umm Kulthoom sent that gift with the mail of 'Umar.[266]

4.6. The results of 'Umar's conquests

1. The destruction of the Sasanid Persian state, and the containment of the Byzantine Roman state, which brought about an end to the senseless conflict that had been ongoing between the Byzantines and the Persians, which has caused the peoples of the region to endure continuous wars that had exhausted both states, and for which there was no purpose except to protect the interests of the rulers of both states.

2. The emergence of a single leadership for this region which lay in the middle of the earth and extended from the borders of China in the east to North Africa in the west, and from the Arabian sea in the south to Asia Minor in the north. This was a new leadership such as mankind had never seen, subject to the same rules, systems and values as other peoples in the region.

3. The domination of a divine system over all people, without pressuring them to change their beliefs or their religions, and without differentiating between black, red, white or yellow. Rather all people

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[266] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/259; *Ashhar Mashâheer al-Islâm*, 2/359.

were equal before the laws of Allah, and the only criterion of superiority was piety. The people realized the benefits of applying the laws of Allah in their lives, as that brought safety, stability, blessings and ample provision, etc.

4. The emergence of a new ummah, which was united by the doctrine of *Tawḥeed* and the laws of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. The bonds of race, lineage or other worldly factors no longer mattered. In this ummah emerged leaders of all races, who acquired positions of high status among the ummah, with nothing to detract from that status. Hence they used to say to those who fought them: "If you accept our religion, we will leave among you the Book of Allah as a way of life for you, and provided that you adhere to its rulings, we will go back and leave your country to you."[267]

5. There emerged an integrated, balanced and harmonious civilization, which included within its borders interactions between nations and peoples who were all subject to the laws of Allah. All peoples were accepted as members of this civilization, black, yellow and white, in accordance with the divine system and rulings. 'Umar became an example of leadership in his time, giving us a shining example of a knowledgeable, believing, strong man, who used all the resources of his state, his troops, his followers, his knowledge and all the means at his disposal to support the religion of Allah and serve mankind, to make the word of Allah supreme and to bring people forth from darkness to light, from the worship of men and material things to the worship of Allah. Thus he fulfilled the words of Allah:

﴿Those [Muslim rulers] who, if We give them power in the land, [they] enjoin *Iqamat aṣ-Ṣalâh* [i.e. to perform the five compulsory congregational *Ṣalâh* (prayers) (the males in mosques)], to pay the

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[267] *Dirâsât fee 'Ahd an-Nubuwwah* by al-Shajjâ', p. 370.

Zakah and they enjoin *al-Ma'roof* [i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do], and forbid *al-Munkar* [i.e. disbelief, polytheism and all that Islam has forbidden] [i.e. they make the Qur'an as the law of their country in all the spheres of life]. And with Allah rests the end of [all] matters [of creatures].﴾ *(Qur'an 22: 41)*

The Islamic conquests produced a noble human civilization in the shade of Islam. Thus we may understand that a divinely-guided civilization is one in which a group interacts to act as vicegerent on earth within the framework of Islamic concepts of life, the universe and man.[268]

5. The Last Days of 'Umar's Life

The caliph 'Umar was a fine example of a just, believing caliph, a pious, pure, strong and honest *mujâhid*, a strong fortress for the ummah and its *'aqeedah*. He spent his entire caliphate serving his religion and his *'aqeedah* and his ummah, which he had been appointed to lead. He was the supreme commander of the army, and the *faqeeh* and *mujtahid* to whom everyone referred. He was a just judge and a compassionate father who was merciful to his flock, young and old, weak and strong, poor and rich. He was a sincere believer in Allah and His Messenger, a brilliant politician and a wise and decisive administrator. Under his leadership the structure of the ummah was strengthened, and during his reign the pillars of the Islamic state were established and the greatest victories were achieved over the Persians at al-Qâdisiyah, al-Madâ'in, Jaloola' and Nahawand. Syria and Egypt were conquered and freed from the domination of Byzantium.[269] Islam entered most of the lands

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[268] *Al-Islâm wa al-Ḥaḍârah* by WAMY, 1/90.

[269] *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by al-'Âni, p. 151.

surrounding the Arabian Peninsula. His caliphate was a strong barrier against tribulation and civil war. 'Umar himself was like a closed door, and those who sought to stir up tribulation could find no way to reach the Muslims during his lifetime.[270]

5.1. Discussion between 'Umar and Ḥudhayfah concerning tribulations (and the approaching breaking of the door)

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân (ﷺ) said: "We were with Ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) and he said, 'Who among you remembers what the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said about *fitnah* (tribulation)? I said, 'I remember it as he said it.' He said, 'Tell us, what a great man your father was!' I said, 'I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, «'The tribulation of a man is with regard to his family, his wealth, his own self, his son and his neighbour, and it may be expiated by means of fasting, praying and giving charity, and by enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil.'» 'Umar said, 'That is not what I mean. What I mean is the tribulations which will come like the waves of the sea.' I said, 'What does that have to do with you, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*? Between you and them is a closed door.' He asked, 'Will that door be broken or opened?' I said, 'It will be broken.' He said, 'Then it will never be closed until the Hour begins.'" Abu Wâ'il, the one who narrated it from Ḥudhayfah, said: "Did 'Umar know who was meant by the door?" Ḥudhayfah said, "Yes. He knew it for certain." Then Abu Wâ'il said, "Let us ask Ḥudhayfah who is meant by the door." We said to Masrooq, "Go and ask Ḥudhayfah who is the door." Masrooq asked Ḥudhayfah, "Who is the door?" Ḥudhayfah said, "It is 'Umar."[271]

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[270] *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen* by al-Khâlidi, p. 77.

[271] Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Fitan*, hadith no. 7096.

Ḥudhayfah informed 'Umar (ﷺ) that he was the strong door which was preventing tribulation or civil war from engulfing the Muslims, but this door would be broken, which meant that after that it would never be closed again until the Hour began. This is what 'Umar understood, namely that tribulations would continue to be widespread and common among the Muslims and they would never be able to eliminate them or put a stop to them. Ḥudhayfah (ﷺ) was not stating that of his own accord or expecting it to happen, for he had no knowledge of the unseen, rather he heard it from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and understood it and memorized it as he had heard it. Hence he commented on what he told 'Umar by saying: "I have told you a hadith and I am not mistaken — i.e., it is a *ṣaḥeeḥ* and true hadith, not a mistake or a fabrication — because I heard it from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ)." Moreover, 'Umar was aware of the facts that Ḥudhayfah told him, for he knew that his caliphate was a strong door that was preventing tribulation from engulfing the Muslims, and that tribulation would never overwhelm the Muslims during his caliphate and his lifetime.[272] 'Umar had learned from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that he would be killed, and that he would meet Allah as a martyr. Anas ibn Mâlik (ﷺ) said: «"The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) climbed Mount Uḥud, accompanied by Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmân, and the mountain shook with them. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) stuck it with his foot and said, 'Stand firm, O' Uḥud, for there is no one on you but a Prophet, a *Ṣiddeeq* and two martyrs.'"»[273]

5.1.1. The *du'â'* of 'Umar during his last Ḥajj, 23 A.H.

It was narrated from Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib that when 'Umar departed from Mina, he stopped in al-Abtaḥ, made a pile of sand, threw his cloak over it and lay down on it, then he raised his hands

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[272] *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon* by al-Khâlidi, p. 79.

[273] Bukhari, *Kitâb Faḍâ'il Aṣḥâb an-Nabi*, hadith no. 3675.

towards heaven and said: "O' Allah, I have grown old and weak, and the people under my care have been scattered. Take me (in death) before I commit any act of neglect or heedlessness." Then he went to Madeenah.[274]

5.1.2. 'Umar's prayer for martyrdom

It was narrated from Zayd ibn Aslam that 'Umar said: «"O' Allah, bless me with martyrdom for Your sake, and cause me to die in the land of Your Prophet." According to another report: "O' Allah, let me be killed for Your sake and die in the land of Your Prophet." It was asked: "How could that happen?" He said, "Allah may cause it to happen."»[275] Shaykh Yoosuf ibn al-Ḥasan ibn 'Abdul-Hâdi commented on 'Umar's prayer for martyrdom by saying: "Wishing for martyrdom is *mustaḥabb*, and it is different from wishing for death. If it is asked, what is the difference between them? The answer is that wishing for death is seeking to hasten death before its time has come, but the longer a man lives the more good he does. Wishing for martyrdom is asking for death at its proper time, as a martyr; it is not asking for death to be brought forward from its appointed time, rather it is seeking a virtuous death."[276]

5.1.3. The dream of 'Awf ibn Mâlik al-Ashja'i

'Awf ibn Mâlik al-Ashja'i said: "During the caliphate of Abu Bakr (ﷺ), I saw a rope hanging down from heaven, and the people

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[274] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/872. Its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ* up to Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib.

[275] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/331; its isnad is *ḥasan*. *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/872.

[276] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb fee Faḍâ'il Ameer al-Mu'mineen 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, 3/791.

were stretching up to reach it. 'Umar was three cubits taller than the others, and I asked, 'Why is that?' He said, 'Because he is one of the vicegerents of Allah on earth, and he does not fear the blame of any blamer, and he will be killed as a martyr.' The next morning, I went to Abu Bakr and told him about that, and he said, 'O' slave, go to Abu Ḥafṣ and call him to me.' When he came, he said, 'O' 'Awf, tell him what you saw.' When I told him that he was one of the vicegerents of Allah, 'Umar said, 'Does a sleeper see all of this?' He said, 'Tell him about it.'[277] When 'Umar was appointed caliph, he came to al-Jâbiyah and whilst he was delivering a speech, he called me and told me to sit down. When he had finished his speech, he said, 'Tell me about your dream.' I asked, 'Didn't you forbid me to speak of it?' He said, 'I didn't mean it, O' man.'[278] According to another report, he said, 'Were you not telling lies?' He said, 'No, but I felt shy before Abu Bakr.'[279] When I told him he said, 'As for becoming caliph, that has happened, as you can see. With regard to not fearing the blame of any blamer, I do not fear anyone but Allah, and I hope that that is true. But as for being killed as a martyr, how can that happen when I am in the Arabian Peninsula?' "[280]

5.1.4. The dream of Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari concerning the death of 'Umar

Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari said: "I saw myself as if I had taken many horses, then they started to disappear, one after another, until only one was left. I took it and went to Jabal Zalaq, where I saw the

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[277] *Mahḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/869.

[278] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/868, 869. Its isnad is *ḥasan* and includes 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn al-Mas'oodi who is truthful but became confused before he died. *at-Taqreeb*, no. 3919.

[279] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/331; *Mahḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/868.

[280] *Mahḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/869.

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) with Abu Bakr beside him, and he was gesturing to 'Umar to come." I (the narrator) said, "Why don't you write news of that to 'Umar?" He said, "I do not want to tell him the news of his own death."[281]

5.1.5. The last *Jumu'ah khuṭbah* given by 'Umar in Madeenah

'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf narrated some of what 'Umar said in his *khuṭbah* on Friday 21 *Dhu al-Ḥijjah* 23 A.H., which was his last *khuṭbah*. I have quoted what 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf said in my discussion of how Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq was appointed as caliph, in my biography of Abu Bakr. 'Umar himself told the Muslims of a dream that he had seen and interpreted it for them. He said in that last *khuṭbah*: "I have seen a dream, and I think it signals my death. I saw myself being pecked by a rooster twice, and the people were telling me to appoint a caliph after me. Allah will not cause His religion or His caliphate to be lost, nor that with which He sent His Prophet. If I die, then the caliphate is to be decided by a council of these six men with whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was pleased when he died."[282]

5.1.6. 'Umar's meeting with Ḥudhayfah before he was stabbed

Four days before 'Umar was martyred — i.e. on Sunday 23 *Dhu al-Ḥijjah* — 'Umar met with the two *Ṣâḥabis*, Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân and Sahl ibn Ḥunayf (may Allah be pleased with them both).

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[281] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/332, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[282] *Al-Mawsoo'ah al-Ḥadeethiyah Musnad al-Imâm Aḥmad*, no. 89, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

He had appointed Ḥudhayfah to estimate the *kharâj* on the land which was irrigated by the water of the Tigris, and he had appointed Sahl ibn Ḥunayf to estimate the *kharâj* of the land which was irrigated by the water of the Euphrates. He said to them: "What did you do? I am afraid that you may have imposed more that the land can bear." They said, "We imposed a reasonable amount." 'Umar said, "If Allah keeps me safe, I will leave the widows of the people of Iraq needing no man after me." But he was stabbed four days after this discussion with these two *Ṣaḥâbis*.[283]

5.1.7. 'Umar preventing the prisoners from settling in Madeenah

'Umar did not give the prisoners from the conquered regions permission to enter Madeenah, the capital of the caliphate. He forbade the Magians of Iraq and Persia, and the Christians of Syria and Egypt, to settle in Madeenah, unless they became Muslim and entered the faith. This attitude is indicative of his wisdom and foresight, because these defeated people hated Islam and had plenty of motives to conspire and plot against Islam and the Muslims. Hence he forbade them to settle in Madeenah, so as to ward off evil from the Muslims. But some of the *Ṣaḥâbah* (may Allah be pleased with them) had slaves from among these Christian and Magian prisoners, and some of them urged 'Umar to give permission to some of these slaves to settle in Madeenah, so that they could make use of them in their work. So 'Umar reluctantly gave permission to some of them to settle in Madeenah, and what he expected and had warned against came to pass.[284]

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[283] *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon* by al-Khâlidi, p. 82; Bukhari, hadith no. 3700.

[284] *Al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon* by al-Khâlidi, p. 83.

5.2. The murder of 'Umar and the story of the consultative council (*shoora*)

5.2.1. The murder of 'Umar (ﷺ)

'Amr ibn Maymoon said: "I was standing with no one between me and him but 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abbâs on the day when he was struck. When he passed between the rows, he would say, "Make (your rows) straight," and when they were straight, he would go forward and say *takbeer*, and he would recite *Soorah Yoosuf* or *an-Naḥl*, or a similar *Soorah* in the first *rak'ah*, until all the people had gathered. No sooner had he said the *takbeer*, but I heard him say, "The dog has killed – or devoured – me!" when he was stabbed. The foreigner (non-Arab infidel) tried to flee, wielding a two-edged knife, and he did not pass by anyone, right or left, but he stabbed him. He stabbed thirteen people, of whom seven died. When one of the Muslim men saw that, he threw a cloak over him and when the foreigner realized that he had been caught, he killed himself. 'Umar took the hand of 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf and made him go forward to lead the people in prayer. Those who were immediately behind 'Umar saw what had happened; those who were in other parts of the mosque did not realize, but they missed 'Umar's voice, and they were saying, "*Subḥân-Allâh.*" 'Abdur-Raḥmân led them in a brief prayer, and when they finished, 'Umar said, "O' Ibn 'Abbâs, see who killed me." He went around for a while, then he came and said, "It was the slave of al-Mugheerah." He asked, "The craftsman?"[285] He said, "Yes." He said, "May Allah curse him, I told his master to treat him well. Praise be to Allah Who has not caused my death to be at the hands of a man who claimed to be a Muslim. You and your father — meaning

[285] The craftsman: Referring to the slave of al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, Abu Lu'lu'ah Fayrooz.

al-'Abbâs and his son, 'Abdullâh — wanted to bring more infidel foreigners to Madeenah!" Al-'Abbas was the one who had the most slaves, and 'Abdullâh said, "If you wish (we will kill them)." 'Umar said, "No, that is wrong, after they have learned your language and started to pray facing your *qiblah*, and performed Ḥajj as you do."

'Umar was carried to his house, and we set off with him, and it was as if no calamity had ever struck the people before. Some *nabeedh* was brought to him and he drank it, but it came out from his stomach. Then some milk was brought to him and he drank it, but it came out through his wound. They realized that he was dying, so we entered his house and the people came and started praising him. He said: "O' 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar, see what debts I owe." They worked it out, and the total came to eighty-six thousand or thereabouts. He said, "If the family of 'Umar can afford it, pay it off from what you collect from them. Otherwise ask Banu 'Adiyy ibn Ka'b, and if their wealth is not enough then ask Quraysh, but do not go to anyone else after them. Pay off this money on my behalf. And go to 'Â'ishah, the Mother of the Believers, and say, " 'Umar sends you greetings of peace. Do not say *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, for today I am no longer the leader of the believers. Say, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb is asking for permission to stay with his two companions." 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar said *salâm* and asked permission, then he went to her and found her sitting weeping. He said, "Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb sends you *salâms* and is asking for permission to be buried with his two companions." She said, "I had wanted it for myself, but today I will give it up for him." When he came back, it was said, "Abdullâh ibn 'Umar has come." 'Umar said, "Lift me up." So a man helped him to sit up and he asked, "What news do you have?" He said, "That which you want to hear, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*. She has given permission." He said, "Praise be to Allah, nothing was worrying me more than that. When I pass away, carry me there and say: " 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb is asking

permission to enter. When permission is given to me, carry me in, but if she says no, then take me to the graveyard of the Muslims." When he died, we took him out and set off walking. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar said *salâm* and said, "Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb is seeking permission to enter." 'Â'ishah (ﷺ) said, "Bring him in." So he was brought in and placed there with his two companions.[286]

There are other reports which describe in detail the events that are not mentioned in the report of 'Amr ibn Maymoon. Ibn 'Abbâs (ﷺ) said: " 'Umar (ﷺ) was stabbed before dawn, by Abu Lu'lu'ah, the slave of al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, who was a Magian."[287] Abu Râfi' (ﷺ) said: "Abu Lu'lu'ah was a slave of al-Mugheerah ibn Shu'bah, and he used to make grindstones. Al-Mugheerah used to deduct four *dirhams* from him every day. Abu Lu'lu'ah met 'Umar and said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, al-Mugheerah is taking too much from me; ask him to reduce it.' 'Umar said, 'Fear Allah and be good to your master.' 'Umar intended to speak to al-Mugheerah and ask him to reduce it, but the slave got angry and said, 'His justice extends to all of them except me.' So he planned to kill him. He made a two-headed dagger, sharpened it and put poison on it, then he showed it to al-Hormuzân, and asked, 'What do you think of this?' He said, 'I do not think you will strike anyone with it but you will kill him.' Then Abu Lu'lu'ah waited for an opportunity to strike 'Umar. He came to him at the time of *Fajr* prayer and stood behind 'Umar. As was his habit, when the *iqâmah* for prayer was given 'Umar spoke to the people and told them to straighten their rows, then when he said the *takbeer*, Abu Lu'lu'ah stabbed him in the shoulder and then in his side, and 'Umar fell down."[288] 'Amr ibn Maymoon (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "When he was stabbed, I heard him say,

[286] Bukhari, *Kitâb Faḍâ'il aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 3700.

[287] *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerah wa Ḥayât al-Fârooq*, p. 369.

[288] Ibid, p. 370.

﴾... And the Command of Allah is a decree determined.﴿

(Qur'an 33: 38)

5.2.2. Invention of a new way to select the caliph after him

'Umar's concern remained focused on the unity and future of the ummah even during the last moments of his life, despite the painful wounds from which he was suffering. Undoubtedly this was a manifestation of his deep faith, sincerity and selflessness.[289] During those critical moments, 'Umar managed to invent a new and unprecedented way of choosing the new caliph. This is tangible and clear evidence of his understanding of the politics of the Islamic state. The Prophet (ﷺ) had passed away before him without clearly appointing a successor, and when Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq passed away, he appointed 'Umar after consulting the senior *Ṣaḥâbah*. When 'Umar was asked to appoint a successor as he was on his death bed, he thought for a while, then he decided on a different method that suited the situation. When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died, the people were all agreed upon the superiority and seniority of Abu Bakr, so the possibility of conflict was remote, especially since the Prophet (ﷺ) had shown the ummah, in word and deed, that Abu Bakr was the most qualified to take control after he died. When Abu Bakr appointed 'Umar as his successor, he knew that the *Ṣaḥâbah* were all convinced that 'Umar was the strongest and most capable of bearing that responsibility after he was gone. So he appointed him as caliph after consulting the senior *Ṣaḥâbah*, and no one disagreed with him, so there was consensus and they all swore allegiance to 'Umar.[290]

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[289] *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by al-'Âni, p. 161.

[290] *Awwaliyât al-Fârooq*, p. 124; *Fatḥ al-Bâri*, 13/208.

The method of selecting the new caliph was based on limiting *shoora* to a specific number of people. 'Umar chose six of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), all of whom had been present at Badr, and all of whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had been pleased with at the time of his death. All of them were fit to become caliph, even though they varied in their qualifications for the post. 'Umar also defined the way in which the selection was to be made, and how long it should take, and he specified the number of votes that would be sufficient to elect the caliph. He also appointed a man to watch over the procedures and cast the deciding vote in the event of equal numbers of votes for different candidates. He ordered some troops to keep watch over the proceedings and stipulated punishments for anyone who went against the *jamâ'ah*. He sought to prevent disorder by ruling that no one was to enter or listen to what was going on in the assembly of decision makers.[291]

There follows a more detailed discussion of these events:

The number of those appointed for the shoora, and their names

The number of men appointed was six. They were: 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib, 'Uthmân ibn 'Affân, 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqâṣ, az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwâm and Ṭalḥah ibn 'Ubaydullâh (may Allah be pleased with them all). Sa'eed ibn Zayd ibn Nufayl was excluded even though he was one of the ten who had been promised Paradise; perhaps that was because he from the tribe of Banu 'Adiyy (which was 'Umar's own tribe).[292]

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[291] *Awwaliyât al-Fârooq*, p. 124.

[292] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/142.

The way in which the caliph was to be selected

He commanded them to assemble in the house of one of their number and consult with one another. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar was to be present among them as an advisor only. Prayers were to be led by Ṣuhayb ar-Roomi during this consultation period, and al-Miqdâd ibn al-Aswad and Abu Ṭalḥah al-Anṣâri were commanded to watch over the election proceedings.[293]

How long the selection process took

'Umar (ﷺ) stipulated a period of three days, which was sufficient time. If they took longer than that, it would mean that deep conflict would spread, so he said to them: "Do not let the fourth day come without you having a leader over you."[294]

The number of votes that are sufficient to elect the caliph

" 'Umar commanded them to meet and consult one another, and he stated that if five of them agreed on a man and one objected, his head was to be struck with the sword. If four of them agreed on a man and two of them objected, their heads were to be struck."[295]

This is a report which has no sound isnad. It is one of the weird stories quoted by Abu Mukhnaf, and is contrary to the *ṣaḥeeḥ* texts and what is known of the conduct of the *Ṣaḥâbah*. Abu Mukhnaf narrated that 'Umar said to Ṣuhayb: "Stand over them — i.e., the people of *shoora* — and if five agree on a man and one objects, strike his head with the sword. If four of them agree on a man and two object, then strike their heads."[296] But this is a false report. How could 'Umar have said such a thing, when he knew that they were

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[293] *Ashhar Mashâheer al-Islâm fee al-Ḥarb wa as-Siyâsah*, p. 648.
[294] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/364.
[295] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/226.
[296] Ibid.

among the elite of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and he was the one who had chosen them for this task because he knew of their virtue and high status?[297] It was narrated from Ibn Sa'd that 'Umar said to the Anṣâr: "Let them stay in a house for three days. If they come to an agreement (all well and good), otherwise enter the house and strike their necks (i.e., cut off their heads)."[298] This is a *munqaṭi'* report, and its isnad includes Sammâk ibn Ḥarb, who is *ḍa'eef*.[299]

The correct report on this matter was narrated by Ibn Sa'd with an isnad whose men are *thiqât* (trustworthy), according to which 'Umar said to Ṣuhayb: "Lead the people in prayer for three days, and leave this group of men in a house. When they have agreed upon a man, then whoever disagrees with them, strike his neck (i.e., execute him)."[300] 'Umar (ﷺ) issued orders that anyone who tried to go against this group and cause division among the Muslims was to be executed, acting upon the command of the Prophet (ﷺ): «"Whoever comes to you when you are united behind one man, seeking to cause division among you, then execute him."»[301]

Ruling in the case of a difference of opinion

'Umar advised them that 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar should be present with them in the gathering, but he was not to play any role. But he told them: "If three men approve of one man and three approve of another man, then refer to 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar, and whichever of the two groups he favours, let them choose a man from among themselves. If they do not approve of the ruling of 'Abdullâh

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[297] *Marwiyât Abu Mukhnaf fee Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari* by Dr. Yaḥya al-Yaḥya, p. 175.

[298] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/342.

[299] *Marwiyât Abu Mukhnaf fee Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, p. 176.

[300] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/342.

[301] Muslim, vol. 3, hadith no. 1480.

ibn 'Umar, then go with the group among whom is 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf." He described 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf as being wise and mature, saying, "What a wise man 'Abdur-Raḥmân ibn 'Awf is, and how mature. He is guided and protected by Allah, so listen to him."[302]

A group of Muslim soldiers were to watch over the election and prevent disorder

'Umar said to Abu Ṭalḥah al-Anṣâri: "O' Abu Ṭalḥah, Allah, may He be exalted and glorified, has supported Islam through you. Choose fifty men of the Anṣâr to urge this group until they choose a man form among their number."[303] And he said to al-Miqdâd ibn al-Aswad: "When you have placed me in my grave, bring this group of men together in a house until they elect one of their number."[304]

Thus ended 'Umar's life. He did not let the calamity that had befallen him or the agonies of death prevent him from organizing the Muslims' affairs. He set up an unprecedented system for *shoora*, but there can be no doubt that the principle of *shoora* was already established in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, in the words and deeds of the Prophet (ﷺ). The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr had already applied this principle, and 'Umar was not introducing something completely new and innovated. Rather what 'Umar did was to devise a method for selecting the new caliph, and to stipulate the number of people from whom he was to be chosen. This was not done by the Messenger (ﷺ) or Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه); 'Umar was the first one to do that and he did well. It was the method that was best suited to the situation of the *Ṣaḥâbah* at that time.[305]

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[302] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/225.

[303] Ibid.

[304] Ibid.

[305] *Awwaliyât al-Fârooq as-Siyâsah*, p. 127.

5.3. 'Umar's advice to the caliph who was to come after him

'Umar (ﷺ) offered important advice to the caliph who was to come after him and lead the ummah. He said: "I advise you to fear Allah alone, with no partner or associate. I advise you to treat the first *Muhâjireen* well and acknowledge their seniority. I advise you to treat the Anṣâr well, and show approval of those among them who do well, and forgive those among them who make mistakes. I advise you to treat the people of the outlying regions well, for they are a shield against the enemy and conduits of *fay'*; do not take anything from them except that which is surplus to their needs. I advise you to treat the people of the desert well, for they are the original Arabs and the protectors of Islam. Take from the surplus of their wealth and give it to their poor. I advise you to treat *ahl adh-dhimmah* well, to defend them against their enemies and not burden them with more than they can bear if they fulfil their duties towards the believers or pay the *jizyah* with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued. I advise you to fear Allah and fear His wrath, lest you do anything wrong. I advise you to fear Allah with regard to the people, but do not fear the people with regard to Allah. I advise you to treat the people justly, and to devote yourself to looking after them and protecting them against their enemies. Do not show any favour to the rich over the poor. That will be better for your spiritual well being and will help to reduce your burden of sin, and it will be better for your Hereafter, until you meet the One Who knows what is in your heart. I instruct you to be strict with regard to the commands of Allah, His sacred limits and disobedience with all people, both relatives and others. Do not show any mercy to anyone until you have settled the score with him according to his offence. Treat all people as equal, and do not worry about who is at fault or fear the blame of the blamers. Beware of showing favouritism among the believers with regard to the *fay'*

that Allah has put you in charge of, lest that lead to injustice. Keep away from that. You are in a position between this world and the Hereafter. If you conduct your affairs justly in this world and refrain from indulgence, that will earn you faith and divine pleasure. I advise you not to let yourself or anyone else do wrong to *ahl adh-dhimmah*. I advise you sincerely to seek thereby the Countenance of Allah and the Hereafter. I have chosen advice for you that I would offer to myself or my son. If you do as I have advised you and follow my instructions, you will have gained a great deal. If you do not accept it or pay attention to it, and do not handle your affairs in the way that pleases Allah, that will be a shortcoming on your part and you will have failed to be sincere, because whims and desires are the same and the cause of sin is *Iblees*, who calls man to everything that will lead to his doom. He misguided the generations who came before you and led them to Hell, what a terrible abode. What a bad deal it is for a man to take the enemy of Allah as his friend, who calls him to disobey Allah. Adhere to the truth, strive hard to reach it and admonish yourself. I urge you by Allah to show mercy to the Muslims, honour their elderly, show compassion to their young ones and respect the knowledgeable ones among them. Do not harm them or humiliate them, and do not keep the *fay'* for yourself lest you anger them. Do not deprive them of their stipends when they become due, thus making them poor. Do not keep them away on campaigns for so long that they end up having no children. Do not allow wealth to circulate only among the rich. Do not close your door to the people or allow the strong to oppress the weak. This is my advice to you, as Allah is my witness, and I greet you with peace."[306]

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[306] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât* by Ibn Sa'd, 3/339; *al-Bayân wa at-Tabyeen* by al-Jâḥidh, 2/46; *Jumhurat Khuṭab al-'Arab*, 1/263-265; *al-Kâmil fee at-Târeekh*, 2/210; *al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by al-'Âni, Pp. 171, 172.

This advice is indicative of 'Umar's farsightedness with regard to matters of ruling and administration, which clearly reflects an integrated methodology and system of ruling and administration.[307] This advice covers a number of very important issues and deserves to be viewed as a precious document because it includes basic principles of ruling which incorporate the religious, political, military, economic and social aspects of rule.

5.3.1. Religious aspects

1. Strong advice to fear Allah in secret and in public, in word and deed, because the one who fears Allah will be protected by Him. "I advise you to fear Allah alone, with no partner or associate." "I advise you to fear Allah and fear His wrath."

2. Imposing the *ḥudood* punishments on relatives and strangers alike. "Do not worry about who is at fault or fear the blame of the blamers" because *ḥudood* punishments are set out by shari'ah and are part of the religion, and shari'ah is evidence against people, so their words and deeds will be measured according to it, and neglecting it will corrupt religion and society.

3. Firm adherence to Islam ·

﴾So stand [ask Allah to make] you [Muhammad] firm and straight [on the religion of Islamic Monotheism] as you are commanded.﴿

(Qur'an 11: 112)

This is something that is essential in both religious and worldly terms, and is something that is required of the ruler in both word and deeds, and also of the people. "Admonish yourself." "Seek thereby the Countenance of Allah and the Hereafter."

[307] *Al-Idârah al-Islâmiyah fee 'Aṣr 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 381.

5.3.2. Political aspects

1. Adhering to justice, because that is the basis of rule, and establishing justice among the people gives the ruler authority and respect, and brings political and social stability. It enhances the position of the ruler in the eyes of the people. "I advise you to treat the people justly." "Treat all people as equal."

2. Taking care of the first Muslims from among the *Muhâjireen* and Anṣâr, because of their seniority in Islam, and because the Islamic religion and the political system that is based on it was established as the result of their striving, and they are its bearers and guardians. "I advise you to treat the first *Muhâjireen* well and acknowledge their seniority. I advise you to treat the Anṣâr well, and show approval of those among them who do well, and forgive those among them who make mistakes."

5.3.3. Military aspects

3. Paying attention to the army and preparing it properly, because of the great responsibility that is placed on its shoulders, in order to guarantee the safety and security of the state. Paying attention to the needs of the fighters.

4. Not keeping the fighters away from their families on the borders for too long, so as to avoid the boredom, anxiety and loss of morale to which that may lead. It is essential to give them leave at specified times and let them go back to their families, so that they will not cease to produce offspring. "Do not keep them away on campaigns for so long that they end up having no children." "I advise you to treat the people of the outlying regions well, for they are a shield against the enemy."

5. Giving each soldier the *fay'* and stipend to which he is entitled, in

order to guarantee a fixed income for him and his family, which will motivate him to fight in jihad and prevent him from worrying about his financial affairs. "Do not keep the *fay'* for yourself lest you anger them." "Do not deprive them of their stipends when they become due, thus making them poor."

5.3.4. Economic and financial aspects

6. Taking care to distribute wealth among the people in a just and fair manner, avoiding anything that could lead to the accumulation of wealth among one class, to the exclusion of others. "Do not allow wealth to circulate only among the rich."

7. Not burdening *ahl adh-dhimmah* with more than they can bear if they fulfil their financial obligations to the state. "(Do) not burden them with more than they can bear if they fulfil their duties towards the believers."

8. Protecting the people's financial rights and not neglecting them; avoiding the imposition of more than they can bear. "Do not take anything from them except that which is surplus to their needs." "Take from the surplus of their wealth and give it to their poor."[308]

5.3.5. Social aspects

1. Taking care of the people, checking on them, meeting their needs and giving them their rights. "Do not deprive them of their stipends when they become due."

2. Avoiding selfishness, favouritism and following whims and desires, because these things pose the danger of the leader being led astray and leading to corruption in society and the disruption of

[308] *Al-Khaleefah al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb* by al-'Âni, Pp. 174, 175.

human relations. "Beware of showing favouritism among the believers with regard to the *fay'* that Allah has put you in charge of." "Do not show any favour to the rich over the poor."

3. Respecting the people and being humble towards them, young and old, because this will lift human relations to a higher level and lead them to unite behind the leader and love him more. "I urge you by Allah to show mercy to the Muslims, honour their elderly, show compassion to their young ones and respect the knowledgeable ones among them."

4. Being accessible to the people, by listening to their complaints, judging among them and settling scores, otherwise relations will be adversely affected and there will be instability in society. "Do not close your door to the people or allow the strong to oppress the weak."

5. Following the truth and striving to establish it in society in all situations and circumstances, because this is a social necessity that must be achieved. "Adhere to the truth, strive hard to reach it." "Treat all people as equal, and do not worry about who is at fault."

6. Avoiding wrongdoing in all shapes and forms, especially with *ahl adh-dhimmah*, because justice is to be established among all those who come under the state's rule, Muslims and otherwise, so that all may benefit from the justice of Islam. "I advise you not to let yourself or anyone else do wrong to *ahl adh-dhimmah.*"

7. Taking care of the people of the desert and looking after them. "I advise you to treat the people of the desert well, for they are the original Arabs and the protectors of Islam."[309]

8. Further advice offered by 'Umar to the one who came after him

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[309] Op. cit., Pp. 173-175.

was: "Do not leave anyone who was appointed during my reign for more than one year, but leave al-Ash'ari for four years."[310]

5.4. The final moments

Ibn 'Abbâs (ﷺ) described the final moments in the life of 'Umar when he said: "I entered to see 'Umar when he had been stabbed, and said, 'Receive the glad tidings of Paradise, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, for you became Muslim when the people disbelieved, and you strove in jihad with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) when the people let him down. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died when he was pleased with you, no one disputed your appointment as caliph, and you have been killed as a martyr.' 'Umar said, 'Say it again.' So I repeated it to him, and he said, 'By Allah, besides Whom there is no other god, if I had all the gold and silver in the world, I would pay it to avoid the terror of what comes after death.'"[311] According to a report narrated by Bukhari, "As for what you have said about having been a Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and his having been pleased with me, that is a blessing that Allah has bestowed upon me. As for what you see of my worry, that is because I am worried about you and your companions. By Allah, if I had an earthful of gold, I would use it to ransom myself from the punishment of Allah before I saw it."[312]

'Umar was profoundly afraid of the punishment of Allah even though the Prophet (ﷺ) had testified that he was bound for Paradise; despite that he made great efforts to establish the rule of Allah and justice, was a great ascetic, engaged in jihad and did other righteous

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310 *'Asr al-Khilâfah ar-Râshidah*, p. 102.

311 *Saheeh at-Tawtheeq fee Seerat wa Hayât al-Fârooq*, p. 383.

312 Bukhari, *Kitâb Fadâ'il as-Sahâbah*, hadith no. 3692.

deeds. This offers an important lesson to the Muslims in general, that they should remember the stern punishment of Allah and the terrors of the Day of Judgement.[313]

'Uthmân tells of the last moments in the life of 'Umar, as he says: "I was the last of you to see 'Umar. I entered to see him and his head was resting in the lap of his son 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar. He said to him: "Lay my cheek upon the ground." He said, "Is there any difference between my thigh and the ground?" He said, "Lay my cheek on the ground, may you be bereft of your mother," the second or third time. Then he crossed his legs and I heard him say, "Woe to me and woe to my mother if Allah does not forgive me," then his soul departed.[314]

This is an example of 'Umar's characteristic fear of Allah, for his last words were words of woe against himself if Allah did not forgive him, even though he was one of the ten who had been given the glad tidings of Paradise. But the one who knows more of Allah fears Allah more. His insistence that his son lay his cheek on the ground was a kind of humbling himself in order to glorify Allah, because that would be more likely to bring a response to his *du'â'*. This shows us how much his heart was focused on Allah.[315]

5.4.1. The date of his death and his age at death

Adh-Dhahabi said: "He was martyred on a Wednesday, the twenty-sixth or twenty-seventh of *Dhu al-Ḥijjah* 23 A.H., and he was sixty-three years old according to the correct view."[316] His caliphate

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313 *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 19/33.

314 *Ṣaḥeeḥ at-Tawtheeq fee Seerat wa Ḥayât al-Fârooq*, p. 383.

315 *At-Târeekh al-Islâmi*, 19/44, 45.

316 *At-Tahdheeb*, no. 177, quoting from *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/840.

lasted a little more than ten and a half years.[317] In *Tareekh Abi Zar'ah* it is narrated that Jareer al-Bajali said: "I was with Mu'âwiyah and he said, 'The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died when he was sixty-three years old, and Abu Bakr (ﷺ) died when he was sixty-three years old, and 'Umar (ﷺ) was killed when he was sixty-three years old.' "[318]

5.4.2. *Ghusl,* funeral prayer and burial

It was narrated from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar that 'Umar was washed and shrouded and the funeral prayer was offered for him, although he was a martyr.[319] The scholars differed concerning one who is killed unjustly — is he like a martyr so he should not be washed, or not? There are two views:

1. That he should be washed. This report is evidence for those who are of this opinion.[320]

2. That he should not be washed and the funeral prayer should not be offered for him. Their answer concerning the story of 'Umar is that 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) lived for a while longer after he was struck. If a martyr lives after he has been struck, even a martyr who is struck in battle, and eats or drinks or lives for a long time afterwards, then he is to be washed and the funeral prayer offered for him. 'Umar lived for a while afterwards, drinking water and whatever the doctor gave him. Hence he was washed and the funeral prayer was offered for him.[321]

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[317] *Siyar as-Salaf* by Abu al-Qâsim al-Isfahâni, 1/160.

[318] Muslim, *Fadâ'il aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah,* hadith no. 2352; *Mahḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb,* 3/843.

[319] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât,* 3/366, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ.*

[320] *Al-Inṣâf* by al-Mardâwi, 2/503; *Mahḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb,* 3/844.

[321] *Mahḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb,* 3/845.

5.4.3. Who offered the funeral prayer for him?

Adh-Dhahabi said that Ṣuhayb ibn Sinân offered the prayer for him.[322] Ibn Sa'd said: " 'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn asked Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyib, 'Who offered the funeral prayer for 'Umar?' He said, 'Ṣuhayb.' He said, 'How many *takbeers* did he say?' He said, 'Four.' He asked, 'Where was the prayer offered?' He said, 'Between the grave and the *minbar*.' "[323] Ibn al-Musayyib said: "The Muslims looked and saw that Ṣuhayb was leading them in the obligatory prayers, on the instruction of 'Umar, so they made him lead the funeral prayer for 'Umar."[324] 'Umar did not appoint any of the six candidates for the caliphate to lead the prayer, lest that be seen as an endorsement of that man by 'Umar. Ṣuhayb was also held in high esteem by 'Umar and the *Ṣaḥâbah*, and 'Umar had said concerning him: "What a good man Ṣuhayb is; even if he did not fear Allah, he still would not disobey Him."[325]

5.4.4. The burial of 'Umar

Adh-Dhahabi said: "He was buried in the room where the Prophet (ﷺ) was buried."[326] Ibn al-Jawzi narrated that Jâbir said: " 'Uthmân, Sa'eed ibn Zayd, Ṣuhayb and 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar went down into the grave of 'Umar."[327]It was narrated that Hishâm ibn 'Urwah said: «"When the graves of the Prophet (ﷺ), Abu Bakr and 'Uthmân collapsed during the time of al-Waleed ibn 'Abdul-Mâlik[328], they started to rebuild it, then a foot appeared and they got

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[322] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/845.

[323] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/366, its isnad includes Khâlid ibn Ilyâs, who is *matrook*.

[324] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/367; *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/845.

[325] *Al-Fatâwa*, 15/140.

[326] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/846.

[327] Ibn Marwân al-Umawi, one of the Umayyad caliphs.

[328] Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Janâ'iz*, hadith no. 1326.

scared, thinking that it was the foot of the Prophet (ﷺ). They could not find anyone to confirm that, until 'Urwah said to them, 'No, by Allah, it is not the foot of the Prophet (ﷺ) rather it is the foot of 'Umar (ﷺ).' "»[329]

We have mentioned above that 'Umar sent word to 'Â'ishah saying: "Give me permission to be buried with my two companions." She said, "Yes by Allah." Hishâm ibn 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr said: "If any man from among the *Ṣaḥâbah* sent word to her concerning that, she would say, "I will not give it up for anybody."[330] There is no dispute among the scholars; all are agreed that the Prophet (ﷺ), Abu Bakr and 'Umar are buried in this place in the Prophet's Mosque.[331]

5.4.5. What 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib said concerning 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them)

Ibn 'Abbâs said: " 'Umar was placed on his bed and the people surrounded him, praying for him before he was lifted up, and I was among them. Suddenly I felt a man taking hold of my shoulder and it was 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭâlib. He prayed for mercy for 'Umar, then he said, 'There is no one that I would love to meet Allah with deeds like his more than you. By Allah, I always thought that you would join your two companions, for I remember that I often heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say, «'Abu Bakr, 'Umar and I went; Abu Bakr, 'Umar and I entered; Abu Bakr, 'Umar and I came out.' "»[332]

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[329] Bukhari, *Kitâb al-I'tiṣâm*, hadith nos. 2671 and 6897.

[330] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/848.

[331] Ibid.

[332] Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Manâqib*, hadith no. 3685.

5.4.6. The effect of his killing on the Muslims

This event had a great impact on the Muslims, for his death did not come after a lengthy illness. The impact was made greater by the fact that it happened in the mosque when 'Umar was leading the people in *Fajr* prayer. If we understand the state that the Muslims were in after this happened, we will realize what an effect it had on them. 'Amr ibn Maymoon said: "It was as if no calamity had ever befallen the people before that day. Ibn 'Abbâs went to find out what had happened after the killing of 'Umar, and he did not pass by any group of people but they were weeping as if they had lost the dearest of their children."[333]

'Umar was a beacon of guidance, a criterion between truth and falsehood, so it was natural that the people should be affected by his loss.[334] The people were clearly affected deeply. It was narrated that al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays said: "When 'Umar was stabbed, he ordered Ṣuhayb to lead the people in prayer, and to feed them for three days until they agreed upon a man (to succeed him as caliph). When the food was served, the people refrained from eating. Al-'Abbâs said, 'O' people, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) died and we ate and drank after he was gone, and Abu Bakr died, and we ate. The people cannot do without eating and drinking.' Then he stretched forth his hand (to take food) and the people ate."[335]

When mention of 'Umar was made to 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood (may Allah be pleased with them both), he wept until the pebbles grew wet with his tears, then he said: " 'Umar was a fortress of Islam, the people would enter Islam and not leave. When he died, the

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[333] *Al-'Ashara al-Mubashsharoon bi al-Jannah* by Muhammad Ṣâliḥ 'Awḍ, p. 44.

[334] Ibid.

[335] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/855.

fortress was breached, and now people are going out of Islam."[336]

Before 'Umar was killed, Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrâḥ used to say: "If 'Umar dies, Islam will be weakened. I would not like to have all that the sun rises and sets over in return for surviving after 'Umar is gone." It was asked to him, "Why?" He said, "You will see what I am speaking about if you survive. If anyone comes after 'Umar and tries to rule in the same style as 'Umar, the people will not obey him or support him, and if he is weak, they will kill him."[337]

5.5. Lessons learned from the killing of 'Umar

5.5.1. Highlighting the hatred that is hidden in the *kafirs'* hearts against the believers

This is indicated by the fact that the Magian Abu Lu'lu'ah killed 'Umar (ﷺ). That is the nature of the *kuffâr* in all times and in all places. Their hearts bear nothing but hatred, envy and resentment towards the Muslims, and they wish nothing but evil and doom for the believers. They would like nothing more than for the Muslims to apostatize from their religion and disbelieve after having become Muslims.[338] Anyone who looks closely at the story of 'Umar's slaying and what this hate-filled Magian Abu Lu'lu'ah did, will learn two important things from it which reveal the hatred that this *kâfir* held in his heart towards 'Umar and the Muslims. These are:

1. It is proven in *aṭ-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa'd, with a *ṣaḥeeḥ*

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[336] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra*, 3/284.

[337] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât al-Kubra*, 3/284; *al-'Ashara al-Mubashsharoon bi al-Jannah*, p. 44.

[338] *Siyar ash-Shuhada' Duroos wa 'Ibar* by 'Abdul-Ḥameed as-Suḥaybâni, p. 36.

isnad going back to az-Zuhri,[339] that 'Umar said to the Magian one day, "Have I not been told that you said, 'If I wanted to I could make a grindstone that is driven by the wind'?" The Magian turned to him frowning and said, "I shall make for you a grindstone that the people will talk about." 'Umar turned to those who were with him and said, "This slave is threatening me."

2. The second thing which points to the hatred that filled the heart of this Magian is that when he stabbed 'Umar, he also stabbed thirteen *Ṣaḥâbah*, seven of whom died as martyrs. According to the report of Imam al-Bukhari: «"The infidel foreigner flew with a two-edged knife and he did not pass by anyone on his right or his left but he stabbed him, until he stabbed thirteen men, of whom seven died."»[340] Even if 'Umar had wronged him, what had the other *Ṣaḥâbah* done who were attacked by him? Allah forbid that 'Umar should have wronged him. It is narrated in the report of Bukhari that when 'Umar was stabbed, he said: «"O' Ibn 'Abbâs, see who has killed me." He went to find out, then he came back and said. "(It was) the slave of al-Mugheerah." He asked, "The craftsman?" He said, "Yes." He said, "May Allah curse him; I told his master to treat him well. Praise be to Allah Who has not caused my death to be at the hands of a man who claims to be a Muslim."»[341]

Those enemies of Islam who love this Magian Abu Lu'lu'ah have built a memorial shrine to him in Iran which is similar to the idea of the "Unknown Soldier". As-Sayyid Ḥusayn al-Musawi, one of the scholars of an-Najaf, says: "In the Iranian city of Kashân, in an area called Bâghi Feen, there is a shrine like that of the 'Unknown Soldier' in which there is a fabricated grave for Abu Lu'lu'ah Fayrooz al-Fârisi al-Majoosi, the murderer of the second caliph

339 *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/345, its isnad is *saheeh*.

340 Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Manâqib aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 3700.

341 Ibid.

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. They call it the 'resting place of Baba Shujâ' ad-Deen'. Baba Shujâ' ad-Deen is the name that they bestowed upon Abu Lu'lu'ah for his having killed 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. On the walls of this shrine it is written in Farsi, '*Marg bar Abu Bakr, marg bar 'Umar, marg bar 'Uthmân*,' which means 'Death to Abu Bakr, death to 'Umar, death to 'Uthmân'. The shrine is visited by the Iranian Shi'ah, and money and donations are given to it. I have seen this shrine myself. The Iranian Ministry of Guidance has started to expand and renovate it, and they have printed pictures of the shrine on cards to be used for sending greetings and messages."[342]

5.5.2. The humility and fear of Allah by which 'Umar was distinguished

One of the signs of this fear which prevailed in the heart of 'Umar just before he was martyred is the words he spoke when he found out that the one who had stabbed him was the Magian Abu Lu'lu'ah: «"Praise be to Allah, Who has not caused my death to be at the hands of one who claims to be a Muslim."»[343] Despite the justice which was one of the qualities of 'Umar (ﷺ), which was acknowledged by near and far, Arab and non-Arab, he was afraid that he might have wronged one of the Muslims, who had then taken revenge by killing him, and would have had something to argue about before Allah. This is indicated by the report of Ibn Shihâb, according to which 'Umar said: "Praise be to Allah Who has not caused my killer to have anything to claim before Allah because of a prostration that he performed." In the report of Mubârak ibn Faḍḍâlah it says: "... to have anything to claim before Allah because

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[342] *Lillâhi thumma li'l-Târeekh, Kashf al-Asrâr wa Tabri'at al-A'immah al-Athâr*, p. 94.

[343] Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Manâqib aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 3700.

of saying *Lâ ilâha illa-Allâh.*"[344] This is one of the wonders of the life of this divinely-guided leader, which all *dâ'iyahs* and reformers should learn; humility should be one of their main characteristics so that Allah may benefit others through them, as their forefathers benefited through 'Umar (ﷺ).

5.5.3. The deep humility of 'Umar and the great selflessness of 'Â'ishah

The humility of 'Umar (ﷺ)

This is indicated by the story of his martyrdom, when he said to his son 'Abdullâh: «"Go to 'Â'ishah, the Mother of the Believers, and say, ' 'Umar sends you *salâms*. Do not say *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, for today I am no longer the leader of the believers'."»[345] It is also indicated by his words to his son when 'Â'ishah gave him permission to be buried beside his two companions: "When I die, take me there, then say *salâm* and say, ' 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb is asking permission to enter.' If she gives permission, take me in, but if she refuses then take me to the graveyard of the Muslims."[346] May Allah have mercy on 'Umar and bless us with an attitude like his and humility like his. May He reward him with the best reward that He has bestowed upon the pious and humble, for my Lord is Ever Close, Ever Responsive.[347]

The selflessness of 'Â'ishah (ﷺ)

An indication of the selflessness of 'Â'ishah (ﷺ) is that she wished to be buried beside her husband (ﷺ) and her father Abu Bakr,

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[344] *Siyar al-Shuhada' Duroos wa 'Ibar*, p. 40.

[345] Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Manâqib aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 3700.

[346] Ibid.

[347] *Siyar ash-Shuhada'*, p. 41.

but when 'Umar asked permission for that, she allowed it and gave preference to him over herself. She said: "I had wanted it for myself, but I give it up today."[348]

5.5.4. Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil even on his deathbed

'Umar was concerned with enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, and he did not neglect that even when he was facing death with all its pain and hardship. A young man entered to his place when he had been stabbed and tried to console him by saying, "Be of good cheer, O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, for Allah has given you glad tidings. You were one of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and you served Islam, as you know. Then you were appointed caliph and you were just, and now you have been martyred." 'Umar said, "I wish that was enough to get me by, with nothing for me or against me." When the young man turned to leave, his *izâr* (waist wrapper) was touching the ground. 'Umar said, "Bring the boy back to me." He said, "O' son of my brother, lift up your garment, for that is cleaner for your garment and is more obedient to your Lord."[349]

The fact that he was dying did not keep him from enjoining what is good. Hence Ibn Mas'ood (رضي الله عنه) said, according to the report narrated by 'Umar ibn Shabbah: "May Allah have mercy on 'Umar; what he was suffering did not keep him from speaking the truth."[350]

Another example of his great concern to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil when he was in this state was when Ḥafṣah

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[348] Bukhari, *Kitâb al-Manâqib aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah*, hadith no. 3700.

[349] Ibid.

[350] *Fatḥ al-Bâri*, 7/65; *Siyar ash-Shuhada'*, p. 42.

(ﷺ) entered and went near him and said: "O' Companion of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), O' in-law of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen.*" 'Umar said to Ibn 'Umar, "O' 'Abdullâh, sit me up, for I cannot bear what I am hearing." He leaned him on his chest, and he said to her, "I urge you by the rights that I have over you, not to eulogize me after this. As for your eyes (i.e., shedding tears), I have no power over them."[351]

It was narrated that Anas ibn Mâlik said: "When 'Umar was stabbed, Ḥafṣah screamed. 'Umar said, "O' Ḥafṣah, did you not hear the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say, «'The one who is eulogized is tormented?'» Ṣuhayb came and said: "O' 'Umara (a form of eulogy in Arabic)." He said, "Woe to you, O' Ṣuhayb. Did you not hear that the one who is eulogized is tormented?"[352] His keenness for the truth even after he had been stabbed and his blood had flowed was such that when a man said to him: "Appoint 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar as your successor," he said, "It is not for the sake of Allah that you said this."[353]

5.5.5. It is permissible to praise a man for qualities that he possesses, so long as there is no fear of *fitnah*

This was the case with 'Umar, when some of the *Ṣaḥâbah* praised him, because they knew that praising him would not cause any *fitnah* (temptation to admire oneself or become arrogant) to him. Ibn 'Abbâs (ﷺ), who was a great scholar and *faqeeh*, said: "Didn't the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) pray that Islam and the Muslims might be supported by you, when they were living in fear in Makkah?

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351 *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, p. 230; *al-Ḥisbah* by Dr. Faḍl Ilâhi, p. 27.

352 *Faḍâ'il aṣ-Ṣaḥâbah*, by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, 1/814, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

353 *Siyar ash-Shuhada'*, p. 43.

When you became Muslim, that was a support for Islam. Every household benefited from you with regard to their religious and worldly affairs. Now your life has ended with martyrdom, so I congratulate you." These words did not affect 'Umar at all, and he did not feel proud. Hence he replied to Ibn 'Abbâs saying: "By Allah, the one who is deceived is the one who believes you."[354]

5.5.6. The real position of Ka'b al-Aḥbâr with regard to the killing of 'Umar (ﷺ)

Ka'b al-Aḥbâr was Ka'b ibn Mâni' al-Ḥimyari, whose kunya was Abu Isḥâq, but he is best known as Ka'b al-Aḥbâr. He was an adult at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) and he became Muslim during the caliphate of 'Umar in 12 A.H.[355] Before becoming Muslim, he was well known as one of the greatest Jewish scholars of Yemen. After becoming Muslim he learned the Qur'an and Sunnah from the *Ṣaḥâbah*, and they and others learned stories of ancient nations from him. He went to Syria and lived in Homs, where he died.[356]

Ka'b al-Aḥbâr was accused as conspiring to kill 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb. There is a report in aṭ-Ṭabari from al-Musawwar ibn Makhramah (ﷺ) which refers to his being accused of killing 'Umar. In that report it says: "...then 'Umar went to his house, and the next day Ka'b al-Aḥbâr came to him and said to him, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, appoint a successor, for you are going to die in three days.' He asked, 'How do you know?' He said, 'I read it in the Book of Allah, the Torah.' 'Umar said, 'By Allah do you really find 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb in the Torah?' He said, 'No, by Allah, but I find a

[354] *Siyar ash-Shuhada' Duroos wa 'Ibar*, p. 45.

[355] *Jawlah Târeekhiyah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen* by Muhammad as-Sayyid Wakeel, p. 294.

[356] *Siyar A'lâm an-Nubala'*, 3/489-494.

description of you and your qualities, and it says that your time is up.' 'Umar was not feeling any sickness or pain. The next day Ka'b came to him and said, 'O' *Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, one day has gone and one day and night are left; the night is yours until morning comes.' The following morning, 'Umar went out to pray. He used to delegate men to check that the rows were straight, and once they were straightened, he would come and say *takbeer*. Abu Lu'lu'ah came among the people, with a dagger in his hand that had two heads and its handle in the middle. He struck 'Umar six times, one of which was below the navel, and that is the blow that killed him."[357]

Some modern thinkers concluded from this report that Ka'b al-Aḥbâr took part in the conspiracy to kill the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ), such as Dr. Jameel 'Abdullâh al-Maṣri in his book *Athar Ahl al-Kitâb fee al-Fitan wa al-Ḥuroob al-Ahliyah fee al-Qarn al-Awwal al-Hijri*, and 'Abdul-Wahhâb an-Najjâr in his book, *al-Khulafa' ar-Râshidoon*, and Prof. Ghâzi Muhammad Fareej in his book *an-Nishâṭ as-Sirri al-Yahoodi fi al-Fikr wa al-Mumârisah*.[358] Dr. Aḥmad ibn 'Abdullâh ibn Ibrâheem az-Zughaybi refuted the accusation directed against Ka'b al-Aḥbâr by saying:

"What I think concerning this complex matter is that this report which was narrated by Imam aṭ-Ṭabari (may Allah have mercy on him) is not *ṣaḥeeḥ* for many reasons, the most important of which are as follows:

1. If this story were true, one would have expected that 'Umar (ﷺ) would not be content to accept what Ka'b said; rather he would have gathered those Jews who had become Muslim and had knowledge of the Torah, such as 'Abdullâh ibn Salâm, and asked them about this

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[357] *Târeekh aṭ-Ṭabari*, 5/182, 183.

[358] *Al-'Unsuriyah al-Yahoodiyah wa Athâruha fee al-Mujtama' al-Islâmi*, 2/518, 519.

story. If he had done that, then Ka'b would have been caught out and his lie would have been exposed to the people, and 'Umar would have realized that he was involved in a conspiracy to kill him, or he knew of such a conspiracy. In that case 'Umar would have tried to uncover it by all means and punish those who were behind it, including Ka'b. This is what one would expect of any ruler, let alone 'Umar (ﷺ) who was known for his intelligence, sharp wits and insistence on critically examining any news. But no such thing happened, which indicates that it is a fabrication.[359]

2. If this story was in the Torah, Ka'b (may Allah have mercy on him) would not have been the only one to know it. Anyone who had any knowledge of the Torah, such as 'Abdullâh ibn Salâm (ﷺ), would also have known it.[360]

3. If this story was true, that would mean that Ka'b had a hand in the very conspiracy that he was disclosing and that by telling it he was exposing his own part in the conspiracy. This must be false because it is contrary to human nature. It is well known that those who are involved in a conspiracy strive hard to conceal it after it has taken place, so as to avoid the consequences. Disclosing it before it happened is something that would only be done by one who is naïve and foolish. This is unlike the character of Ka'b, who was intelligent and sharp-witted.[361]

4. Moreover, what does the Torah have to do with predicting people's lifespans? Allah revealed His Books as guidance for mankind, not for such purposes.

5. The Torah that is extant at present does not contain any such thing

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[359] *Al-Hadeeth wa al-Muhaddithoon aw 'Inâyat al-Ummah al-Islâmiyah bi'l-Sunnah* by Muhammad Abu Zahu, p. 182.

[360] Ibid.

[361] Ibid.

at all. After noting these first four objections, Shaykh Muhammad Muhammad Abu Zahu[362] commented on them by saying: 'From all of the above, it is clear that this story is undoubtedly fabricated, and that the accusation against Ka'b of plotting against Islam by plotting against 'Umar, and quoting falsely from the Torah, is a false accusation for which there is no basis of evidence or proof.' "[363]

Dr. Muhammad as-Sayyid Ḥusayn adh-Dhababi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

"The fact that Ibn Jareer aṭ-Ṭabari narrated this story does not indicate that it is *ṣaheeḥ*, because as is well known, Ibn Jareer did not limit himself to narrating only those reports which were sound. Anyone who examines his *Tafseer* will find many things that are not *ṣaheeḥ*.[364] Similarly, in his *Tareekh* there are reports which may be true or false. No one says that everything that is narrated in the books of history[365] is true and sound.[366] Then he goes on to say: "Moreover, what we know about Ka'b al-Aḥbâr and his religious commitment, good character and honesty, and the fact that most of the authors of *Ṣaheeḥ* class him as reliable[367], leads us to conclude that this story is a fabrication against him. We think that he is above being a partner in the killing of 'Umar or knowing who was planning to kill him and failing to disclose that to 'Umar. We also think that he is above being a liar and fabricator who would try to support what he was saying about the death of 'Umar by attributing it to the Torah and making up false Isrâ'eeli reports.[368]... By Allah, Ka'b was falsely

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[362] Op. cit., 2/524.

[363] *Al-Ḥadeeth wa al-Muḥaddithoon*, p. 183.

[364] *Al-'Unṣuriyah al-Yahoodiyah*, 2/525.

[365] Ibid.

[366] *Al-Isrâ'eeliyât fee at-Tafseer wa al-Ḥadeeth*, p. 99.

[367] Ibid, p. 96.

[368] Ibid, p. 99.

accused and I can say nothing about him except that he is honest and trustworthy, and he is a scholar whose name was abused and many reports were attributed to him, most of which are false myths, in order to make them acceptable to the masses so that the ignorant would accept them."[369]

Dr. Muhammad as-Sayyid al-Wakeel says:

"The first thing that the researcher finds to contradict that which was attributed to Ka'b is the attitude of 'Ubaydullâh ibn 'Umar who, as soon as he heard what had happened to his father, took up his sword and rushed like a lion to kill al-Hormuzân, Jufaynah and a young daughter of Abu Lu'lu'ah. Do you think that 'Ubaydullâh would leave Ka'b al-Aḥbâr alone if suspicion was swirling about him, and kill the young daughter of Abu Lu'lu'ah? Anyone who researches the matter properly could not accept that. In addition to that, the majority of historians do not mention the story or even refer to it. In *aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, Ibn Sa'd discussed the incident in great detail, but he did not refer to this incident. All he says about Ka'b al-Aḥbâr is that he was standing at 'Umar's door, weeping, and he said: "By Allah, if the caliph were to urge Allah to extend his lifespan, He would do so."[370] After the doctor had told 'Umar that his end was near, Ka'b entered and said: "Did I not tell you that you would only die as a martyr, and you said, 'How can I be a martyr when I am in the Arabian Peninsula?' "[371]

After Ibn Sa'd comes Ibn 'Abdul-Barr, who makes no mention at all in *al-Istee'âb* of the story of Ka'b al-Aḥbâr.[372]

Ibn Katheer says:

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[369] *Al-Isrâ'eeliyât fee at-Tafseer wa al-Ḥadeeth*, p. 99.

[370] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/361.

[371] Ibid, 3/340.

[372] *Jawlah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 296.

"The threat of Abu Lu'lu'ah came on the Tuesday evening, and he stabbed him on the morning of Wednesday 26th of *Dhu al-Ḥijjah*.[373] So between the threat and the carrying out of the threat there was no more than a few hours. How could Ka'b al-Aḥbâr have gone to 'Umar and said to him what he is supposed to have said, "Appoint a successor, for you are going to die within three days", then "One day has passed and two days are left," then, "Two days have passed and one day is left"? Where did Ka'b get these three days from if the threat came at night and was carried out the following morning? The historians come one after another as-Suyooṭi in *Tareekh al-Khulafa'*, al-'Iṣâmi in *Samṭ an-Nujoom al-'Awâli*, Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhâb and his son 'Abdullâh in their book *Mukhtaṣar Seerat ar-Rasool*, Ḥasan Ibrâheem Ḥasan in *Tareekh al-Islam as-Siyâsi*, and others — and none of them mentions this story at all. Does this not indicate that the story cannot be proven in any manner that would make the researcher feel comfortable mentioning it? This is if we do not assume that the story was fabricated by some people who wanted to damage Ka'b's reputation and put the Muslims off him. This is what one may feel comfortable accepting, especially since we know that Ka'b was a good Muslim and was trusted by many of the *Ṣaḥâbah*, who narrated hadith of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) from him.[374]

5.5.7. Praise from the *Ṣaḥâbah* and *salaf* for 'Umar (رضي الله عنه)

The respect of 'Â'ishah for him after his burial

It was narrated that 'Â'ishah (رضي الله عنها) said: "I used to enter my house in which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr were buried, but when 'Umar was buried with them, by Allah I did not

[373] *Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, 7/137.

[374] *Jawlah fee 'Aṣr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 296.

enter it without covering myself properly, out of shyness towards 'Umar."[375] It was narrated from al-Qâsim ibn Muhammad that 'Â'ishah (ﷺ) said: "Whoever saw Ibn al-Khaṭṭâb would realize that he was created to support Islam. By Allah, he was intelligent and wise, and of a unique nature."[376] It was narrated from 'Urwah that 'Â'ishah (ﷺ) said: "When you mention 'Umar, then the atmosphere in a gathering becomes good."[377]

Sa'eed ibn Zayd (ﷺ)

It was narrated from Sa'eed ibn Zayd that he wept when 'Umar died. It was asked to him: "What are you weeping for?" He said, "For Islam, for the death of 'Umar has created a breach in the wall of Islam that will never be repaired until the Day of Resurrection."[378]

'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood (ﷺ)

'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ood said: "If the knowledge of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb were placed in one side of the balance, and the knowledge of everyone else on earth was placed on the other, the knowledge of 'Umar would weigh heavier."[379]

He also said: "I believe that 'Umar took nine-tenths of knowledge."[380] And he said: "Umar's becoming Muslim was a victory, his migration was a support, and his rule was a mercy."[381]

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[375] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/852.

[376] *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/853; all its men are *thiqât* (trustworthy) except 'Abdul-Wâḥid ibn Abi 'Awf who is *ṣudooq* (sincere) but makes mistakes.

[377] Ibid, quoting from *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen*, p. 249.

[378] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/372; *Ansâb al-Ashrâf ash-Shaykhân*, p. 387.

[379] *Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah*, 12/32, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[380] *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer* by aṭ-Ṭabarâni, 9/179, 180, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[381] *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer* by aṭ-Ṭabarâni, 9/178, its isnad is *ḍa'eef* with interruptions.

Abu Ṭalḥah al-Anṣâri (ﷺ)

Abu Ṭalḥah al-Anṣâri said: "By Allah there is no family among the Muslims that was not adversely affected by the death of 'Umar in their religious and worldly affairs."[382]

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân (ﷺ)

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamân (ﷺ) said: "The likeness of Islam during the days of 'Umar is that of one who is increasing in power and esteem, and when he was killed it started to decrease."[383]

'Abdullâh ibn Salâm (ﷺ)

He came after the funeral prayer had been offered for 'Umar and said: "You may have been ahead of me in praying for him, but you will not be ahead of me in praising him." Then he said: "What a good brother in Islam you were, O' 'Umar, a great supporter of the truth and a great opponent of falsehood. You did not praise or criticize too much; you were of good character and chaste."[384]

Al-'Abbâs ibn 'Abdul-Muṭṭalib (ﷺ)

He said: "I was a neighbour of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) and I never saw anyone who was better than 'Umar. His nights were filled with prayer and his days with fasting and meeting people's needs. When 'Umar died, I asked Allah to show him to me in a dream. I saw him in a dream coming towards me from the marketplace of Madeenah. I greeted him with *salâm* and he greeted me, then I said to him, 'How are you?' He said, 'I am well.' I asked him, 'What did you find?' He said, 'My reckoning has just finished. I was almost doomed, were it not that I found a merciful Lord.'"[385]

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[382] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/374.

[383] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/373, its isnad is *ṣaḥeeḥ*.

[384] *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/369.

[385] *Târeekh al-Madeenah*, 3/345; there is some interruption in its isnad; *al-*

Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân (ﷺ)

Mu'âwiyah ibn Abi Sufiyân (ﷺ) said: "Abu Bakr did not desire worldly luxury and it did not become available to him. Worldly luxury was available to 'Umar but he did not want it. But we indulged fully in it."[386]

'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn

It was narrated from Ibn Abi Ḥâzim that his father said: " 'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn was asked about Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) and their status with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). He said: "It was like their status now, as they are lying next to him."[387]

Qubayṣah ibn Jâbir

It was narrated that ash-Sha'bi said: "I heard Qubayṣah ibn Jâbir say, 'I accompanied 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) and I have not seen anyone who was more well-versed in the Book of Allah or who had more understanding of the religion of Allah, or who was better in explaining it.' "[388]

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri

He said: "If you want the atmosphere in a gathering to be good, then mention 'Umar a great deal."[389] He also said: "Any family that does not feel the loss of 'Umar are bad people."[390]

=*Hilyah*, 1/54.

386 *Târeekh al-Islâm 'Ahd al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen* by adh-Dhahabi, p. 267.

387 *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/908.

388 *Al-Ma'rifah wa at-Târeekh* by al-Fasawi, 1/457. Its isnad includes Mujâlid ibn Sa'eed who changed at the end of his life.

389 *Manâqib Ameer al-Mu'mineen* by Ibn al-Jawzi, p. 251; *Maḥḍ aṣ-Ṣawâb*, 3/909.

390 *Aṭ-Ṭabaqât*, 3/372.

5.5.8. Opinions of some contemporary scholars and writers

1. Dr. Muhammad Muhammad [sic] al-Faḥḥâm, the former Shaykh of al-Azhar, said: "The achievements of 'Umar demonstrate his political genius and many talents, and his brilliance which is still a beacon in many area of life, showing how he dealt with the issues and problems that he faced during his caliphate."[391]

2. 'Abbâs Mahmoud al-'Aqqâd said: "This man is one of the most difficult to criticize or find fault with of the great men whom I have studied. My book, *'Abqariyat 'Umar — The Genius of 'Umar —* is not a biography of 'Umar or a history of his era like other histories whose main aim to tell of events. Rather it is a description of 'Umar and a study of various aspects of his personality, which points out the characteristics of his greatness so as to learn of the potential of man. 'Umar is relevant to the era we are living in, because it is an era in which power and force are glorified, where the devotees of power and force believe that power and truth are opposites. But when we try to understand one great man such as 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, we could destroy the concept of glorifying power and strength from its foundations, because we would understand a man who was very powerful, very just and very merciful... This understanding of his character would offer a cure to those who have any hope of being cured."

3. Dr Aḥmad Shalabi said: "... his striving hard was one of the most prominent characteristics in the life of 'Umar during his eventful caliphate. He preserved the faith, raised the banner of jihad, conquered lands, spread justice among people, established the first finance ministry in Islam, formed a regular army to defend the borders, organized salaries for the troops, created departments,

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[391] *Al-Idârah fee al-Islâm fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 391.

appointed governors, agents and judges, approved of a currency for daily use, organized a mail system, established the hisbah system for checking on markets, established the Hijri calendar, left conquered land without dividing it and founded the new Islamic cities."[392]

4. Counsellor 'Ali 'Ali Manṣoor said: "The letter of 'Umar to Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari concerning judicial matters, fourteen hundred years ago, is a constitution for judges and those involved in judicial matters. It marks the highest level that contemporary laws have ever reached, laws that dictate the independence of the judicial process."[393]

5. Brigadier Mahmoud Sheet Mahmoud said: "Although there were many reasons for the Islamic conquests, heading the list of these reasons are the qualities of leadership and brilliance enjoyed by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb, qualities that are rarely repeated in any era."[394]

6. Dr. Ṣubḥi al-Maḥmaṣâni said: "With the end of the caliphate of 'Umar ended the era of the founder of the Islamic state, whose area he had expanded and whose foundations he had reinforced. He was an example of a wise and determined leader, a responsible 'shepherd', a just, strong, kind and compassionate ruler. Then he died, a victim of duty, a martyr to truth and righteousness, so he is with the *ṣiddeeqs* and the righteous, the close friends of Allah. The name of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb will remain forever as a beacon in the history of civilization and fiqh."[395]

7. Shaykh 'Ali aṭ-Ṭanṭâwi said: "The more I study the life of 'Umar, the more my admiration for him increases. I have read the biographies of thousands of great men, both Muslims and non-

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[392] Op. cit., p. 392; *at-Târeekh al-Islâmi,* 1/609.

[393] *Al-Idârah fee al-Islâm fee 'Ahd 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, p. 392.

[394] Ibid, p. 393.

[395] *Turâth al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen fee al-Fiqh wa al-Qaḍâ'*, Pp. 46, 47.

Muslims, and I have found among them those who are great in thought, or great in eloquence, great in attitude or great in legacy. But I found that 'Umar combined all aspects of greatness. He was great in thought, attitude and eloquence. If we were to list the greatest *fuqaha'* and scholars, 'Umar would head the list. If he had nothing but his fiqh, he would still be a great man. If we were to make a list of speakers and orators, 'Umar would be first on the list. If we were to list brilliant legislators, or military leaders, or successful administrators, 'Umar would be at the forefront of each category, a great man in every aspect. If you were to study the great men who have built states, who left a legacy behind on earth, you would hardly find anyone greater than 'Umar. Above all, he was a great man in attitude, a great man in and of himself.[396]

5.5.9. The opinions of some of the orientalists concerning 'Umar (ﷺ)

1. Muir says in his book *The Caliphate*: "Simplicity and devotion to duty were among the most important principles of 'Umar. One of the most prominent characteristics of his administration was the absence of bias. He understood the true meaning of responsibility and his sense of justice was very strong. He did not favour anyone when choosing workers. Even though he used to carry his stick with him to punish sinners straight away, so that it was said that the stick of 'Umar was harsher than the sword of any other man, he was a gentle-hearted man, and there are many incidents that demonstrate his compassion, such as his compassion towards widows and orphans."[397]

2. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says concerning him: "Umar was a

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[396] *Akhbâr 'Umar*, p. 5.

[397] *Al-Fârooq 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb*, by Muhammad Rasheed Riḍa, Pp. 54, 55.

wise and farsighted ruler, who did a great service for Islam."[398]

3. Professor Washington Irving said in his book *Muhammad and His Successors*:

"The life of 'Umar, from beginning to end, shows that he was a man of great brilliance who was committed to righteousness and justice. He is the one who laid the foundations for the Islamic state and carried out the wishes of the Prophet (ﷺ). He supported Abu Bakr with advice during his short caliphate, and he laid strong foundations for a decisive administration in all the lands conquered by the Muslims. The strong hand which he laid on the greatest of his beloved commanders in distant lands is the greatest evidence of his extraordinary ability to rule. In his simplicity of lifestyle and his rejection of luxury he was following the example of the Prophet (ﷺ) and Abu Bakr. He followed in their footsteps when writing and issuing instructions to his commanders."[399]

4. Dr. Michael Hart said:

"The legacy of 'Umar had a great impact. He was the main personality behind the spread of Islam after Muhammad (ﷺ).[400] Without his rapid conquests it is doubtful whether Islam would have spread in the manner in which it is known today. In addition to that, most of the lands which he conquered have remained Arab from that time until now. It is clear that Muhammad (ﷺ) played the major role in this, but it would be plainly wrong to ignore the role of 'Umar and his leadership."[401]

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[398] Op. cit., p. 55.

[399] Ibid.

[400] It seems that Mr. Michael Hart is unaware of the biography of Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq (may Allah be pleased with him).

[401] It is also plainly wrong to ignore the role of Abu Bakr and his leadership after the death of the Messenger of Allah (bpuh).

Conclusion

With the death of the Rightly-Guided Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb (ﷺ) a great era of history came to a close. History knows him as a brilliant man of unique character. His main aim was not to accumulate wealth or seek the luxury of power; his position of authority did not make him drift away from the right path and he did not allow his relatives or sons to abuse people. Rather his main aim was to support Islam, and his greatest wish was that shari'ah would prevail. All he wanted was to achieve justice among the people under his care. He achieved all of that with the help of Allah, may He be glorified, during that brief period which is regarded as nothing in the lifetime of a nation.[402]

Studying this biography gives the new generation a brilliant example that brings back to life the glory of former days and teaches them that the last generations of this ummah will not be guided by anything other than that by which the first generations were guided. This will help *dâ'iyahs* and scholars to follow the example of the era of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and understand the main characteristics of that era and its running of people's affairs. This will help the ummah to resume its role at the forefront of civilization.

I ask Allah to accept this work and to bless it and cause it to be of benefit to people. Allah, the Exalted says:

﴾Whatever of mercy [i.e. of good], Allah may grant to mankind, none can withhold it; and whatever He may withhold, none can grant it thereafter. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴿

(Qur'an 35: 2)

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[402] *Jawlah fee 'Asr al-Khulafa' ar-Râshideen*, p. 297.

I hope that every Muslim who reads this book will not forget to say *du'â'* for its author who is in need of the forgiveness and mercy of his Lord. Allah, the Almighty says:

﴾My Lord! Grant me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your Favours which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous slaves.﴿

(Qur'an 27: 19)

Glory and praise be to You, O' Allah. I bear witness that there is no god but You. I seek Your forgiveness and repent to You. And the close of my prayer is: "Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds."

'Ali Muhammad as-Sallâbi

Glossary

Adhân	اذان	: Call for prayer
Aḥadeeth	احاديث	: Sing. Hadith; Sayings, deeds and approvals of the last Prophet (ﷺ)
Ahl adh-Dhimmah	اهلُ الذِّمة	: Non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic State
Ahl al-Bayt	اهل البَيت	: Family of the last Prophet (ﷺ)
Ahl al-Ḥarb	اهل الحَرب	: Non-Muslims (outside the Islamic State) in a state of war with Islamic State
Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamâ'ah	اهل السُنّة والجَماعة	: The main stream of the Muslims following the Sunnah of the Prophet recognizing Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmân and 'Ali as the rightful successors of the Prophet in the same order
Al-'Asas	العَسس	: Night Patrolling
'Âlameen	عالَمِين	: Universe, Mankind, jinn & all that exists
Al-Bayt al-Ma'moor	البَيت المَعمور	: The House over the Heavens parallel to the Ka'bah at Makkah continuously visited and circumambulated by the angels
Al-Birr	البِرّ	: Righteousness
Al-Fitan	الفِتَن	: Sing. *Fitnah*; Trials, tribulations
Al-Ma'roof	المَعروف	: Conduct accepted as good and fair by human beings in general, deeds that Islam orders one to do
Al-Munkar	المُنكر	: Conduct accepted as bad and unaccep-

table or disapproved by human beings in general, anything hateful, immoral or reprehensible; disbelief, polytheism and all that Islam stands against

Al-Qânit القانِت : Pl. *Qâniteen*; The obedient, humble, pious, God-fearing

Al-Qadr القَدر : Divine decree, Predestination, name of the 97th *Soorah* of the Qur'an

Ameer al-Mu'mineen أمير المُؤمنين : The Leader/Commander of the believers, head of an Islamic state

'Aqeedah عَقِيدَة : Belief, faith, dogma

Ar-Raheem الرَّحِيم : All-Compassionate, one of the attributive names of Allah

Ar-Rahmân الرَّحمٰن : All-Merciful, one of the attributive names of Allah

'Aseedah عَصِيدة : Porridge, gruel made of flour with butter and honey

'Asr عَصر : Afternoon, Afternoon prayer, name of the 103rd *Soorah* of the Qur'an

At-Tâ'oon الطّاعون : The plague

Âyât آيات : Sing. *Âyah*: Proofs, evidences, verses

Barakah بَرَكة : Blessing

Bay'ah بَيعة : Oath of allegiance

Bayt al mâl بَيت المال : Public treasury

Bid'ah بِدعة : Innovation, deviation (in religion)

Dâ'iyah داعِية : Preacher

Dâr ad-Daqeeq دَارالدَّقِيق : House of flour

Da'wah دَعوَة : Propagation of Islam

Dhâlimoon	ظالِمون	: Sing. *Dhâlim*: Lit. tyrannical; oppressive polytheists and wrongdoers
Dhi'b	ذِئب	: Wolf
Dhikr	ذِكر	: Remembrance of Allah
Dhimmi	ذِمّي	: Non-Muslim subject of an Islamic State
Dhuhr	ظُهر	: Noon, Noon prayer
Dinâr	دِينار	: A monetary unit in the Arab world used in Yemen, Libya, Iraq, Jordan and Iran. Originally a coin made of gold and was used in the Muslim land
Dirham	دِرهَم	: A coin used in various Arab countries: Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Tunisia and Monetary unit in Morocco. It was prevalent in the Muslim land before and was generally made of silver
Deewân	دِيوان	: Divan, department, bureau, register of records
Deewan al-Jund	ديوان الجُند	: Military divan, army, military department
Diyah	دِيَة	: Blood-money paid to the survivor of the assassined by the assassin
Du'â'	دُعَاء	: Supplication, prayer
Eemân	إيمان	: Faith, belief
'Eid	عِيد	: Lit. Festival; Muslims have two 'Eids, *'Eid al-Fiṭr* declaring end of Ramaḍân, *'Eid al-Aḍha*, the tenth day of the 12th month of the Muslim calendar
Fâsiq	فاسِق	: Pl. *Fâsiqoon*; transgressor of the commands of Allah, an evildoer

Fajr فَجر : Dawn, Dawn prayer, 89th *Soorah* of the Qur'an

Faqeeh فَقِيه : Pl. *Fuqaha'*; the Islamic Jurists

Fatwa فَتوى : Pl. *Fatâwa*; Religious ruling

Fay' فَيْء : Spoils obtained without fighting as against war-booty. All of such spoils go to the Muslim treasury

Fitnah فِتنَة : Pl. *Fitan*; Trial, tribulation

Fiṭrah فِطرَة : Nature

Fuqara' فُقَراء : Sing. *Faqeer*; the poor

Ghanâ'im غَنَائِم : Sing. *Ghaneemah*; War-booty as a result of the Muslim victory against the enemies of Islam in the battle-field

Ghulool غُلُول : Things taken /stolen from the war-spoils without permission and prior to its distribution

Ḥadd حَدّ : Pl. *Ḥudood*; Limits set by Allah for the lawful and unlawful. *Ḥadd* punishments are specific fixed penalties laid down by the Shari'ah for specific crimes

Ḥafeedh حَفِيظ : Watcher, protector

Ḥalâl حَلال : Things and acts permitted in Islam

Ḥalqah حَلقة : Study circle in the mosque

Ḥamâm حَمّام : Bath room, water closet

Ḥaneef حَنِيف : Pl. *Ḥunafa*; True believer, one who scorns the false creeds surrounding him and professes the true religion, to worship none but Allah

Ḥarâm حَرام : All that is forbidden in Islam

Ḥasad	حَسَد	: Jealousy
Ḥasanât	حَسَنات	: Good deeds
Ḥijâb	حِجاب	: Veil, covering
Hijrah	هِجرَة	: Migration, migration of the last prophet and the early Muslims from Makkah to Madeenah
Ḥikmah	حِكمَة	: The wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet
Ḥima	حِمى	: A common grazing area set up by the state
Ḥisbah	حِسبَة	: Checking on the market
Ḥullah	حُلّة	: Dress like suit
'Iddah	عِدّة	: Waiting period for a divorcee/widowed woman before remarrying
I'râb al-Qur'ân	إعرَاب القرآن	: Putting vowel signs to Arabic letters to facilitate correct pronunciation, syntax
Iblees	إبليس	: Satan, the Devil
Ifrâd	إفرَاد	: Type of Ḥajj where a pilgrim need not perform 'Umrah and offer animal sacrifice
Iḥrâm	إحرام	: Dress code for the (male) pilgrim for performing 'Umrah and/or Ḥajj
Iḥsân	إحسان	: Excellence
Ijmâ'	إجماع	: Consensus of the Muslim Jurists on some legal issues
Ilah	إله	: Pl. *Âliha*; god, deity
Iqâmah	إقامَة	: Call to begin the prayer
Iqâmat us-Ṣalâh	إقامَة الصلوة	: To establish prayer, it has a wider meaning than mere performance of prayer, to

		perform the daily five compulsory congregational prayers in the mosque; the call for prayer before the congregation begins
'Ishâ'	عِشاء :	Night, Night prayer
Istawa	إستَوى :	Rose over (the Mighty throne)
Istikhârah	إستِخارة :	Seeking Divine guidance, a prayer performed to seek guidance from Allah in a matter one is hesitant to decide
Izâr	إزار :	Loincloth
Jâmi'	جامِع :	Mosque, compiler, comprehensive
Jâhili	جاهِلي :	Pre-Islamic, non-Islamic
Jâhiliyah	جاهِلية :	Time of ignorance, pre-Islamic period, non-Islamic
Jamâ'ah	جَماعَة :	The main body of Muslims, congregation, collective body
Janâzah	جَنازَة :	Bier
Jibt	جِبت :	Witchcraft
Jizyah	جِزيَة :	Tax paid by the unbeliever living in the Islamic state under its protection
Jubbah	جُبَّة :	A long dress for men
Jumu'ah	جُمُعَة :	Friday, 62nd *Soorah* of the Qur'an
Junub	جُنُب :	In a state of ritual impurity
Kâfir	كافِر :	Pl. *Kuffâr*; Disbeliever
Kalâlah	كَلالَة :	A deceased person among whose heirs there is no father or son
Khaleefah	خَليفَة :	Caliph, vicegerent, successor, Muslim ruler

Khamr خَمر : Wine, alcohol, anything that befogs the mind

Kharâj خَراج : Tax collected from the conquered land

Khaṭeeb خَطِيب : Public speaker, orator, the one who delivers sermon on *Jumu'ah* and at the time of *Nikâḥ*, i.e., marriage

Khayr خَير : Good, wealth

Khuffayn خُفّين : Socks

Khums خُمس : One fifth, it connotes to the Islamic state's share in the war-booty

Khushoo' خُشوع : Humility (in prayer)

Khuṭbah خُطبَة : Sermon

Kufr كُفر : Disbelief

Kunyah كُنيَة : Surname

Laḥd لَحد : Grave

Madh-hab مَذهَب : Juristic school of thought like Ḥanafi, Mâliki, Shâfi'i, Ḥanbali

Maghrib مَغرِب : Evening, Evening prayer

Mahr مَهر : Bridal money/gift paid by the groom to the bride

Majlis مَجلِس : Assembly, conference room,

Makrooh مَكروه : Reprehensible, an act disapproved in Islamic Law but not forbidden

Minbar مِنبَر : Pulpit

Miskeen مِسكين : Pl. *Masâkeen*; poor, needy, pauper, indigent

Mirbad مِربَد : A place where dates are stored

Mu'âhad مُعاهد : Ally, confederate

Mu'adh-dhin مُؤَذِّن : Caller for prayer

Mudd مُدّ : Half bushel - a dry measure

Mufassireen مُفَسِّرِين : Sing. *Mufassir*; The Exegete, persons interpreting the Qur'an

Mufti مُفتِي : A qualified person, specialist in Islamic Law, delivering religious ruling on specific matters

Muhaddath مُحَدَّث : Inspired

Muhâjiroon مُهَاجِرون : Sing. *Muhâjir*; emigrants especially the Makkan Muslims migrated to Madeenah at the time of the last Prophet

Mujâhidoon مُجاهدون : Sing. *Mujâhid*; People who indulge in war for the cause of Islam

Mujtahid مُجتَهِد : A person qualified to derive religious rulings from the primary sources

Musâqâh مُساقاة : Sharecropping contract over the lease of a plantation, limited to one crop period

Mushrikeen مُشرِكِين : Sing. *Mushrik*; Polytheist, believers in a number of deities, associating persons/ things with God as deity, pagans

Mustahabb مُستَحَب : Recommended and not obligatory or/ and Sunnah

Mut'ah مُتعة : Temporary marriage under certain conditions believed and practiced, nowadays, only by the Shiites

Mutawakkiloon مُتوَكِّلون : Those who put their trust in Allah

Mutawâtir مُتَوَاتِر : Lit. Continuous; In hadith terminology it stands for a hadith narrated continuously by a group of narrators at every stage of narration

Muttakiloon مُتَّكِلُون : Sing. *Muttakil*; Relying/depending/ counting on others. Those who expect others to do things for them

Muttaqoon مُتَّقُون : Sing. *Muttaqi*; Pious, righteous

Nafl نَفل : Optional acts/deeds not obligatory or Sunnah by the Shari'ah

Qâḍi قاضي : Judge of an Islamic court

Qasâmah قَسَامَة : Repeated oath taking by the heirs of the murdered in a legal claim in the court of law; Also an oath taken by fifty members of a tribe or locality to refute accusations of complicity in unclear cases of homicide

Qiblah قِبلَة : Direction the Muslims turn to while praying, Ka'bah in Makkah

Qinṭâr قِنطَار : Pl. *Qanâṭeer*; 'kantal' a relatively large weight-measure for food grains, e.g. wheat etc., approximately 45 kgs.

Qeerâṭ قِيرَاط : Pl. *Qarâreeṭ*; A measurement of weight with various meanings, with twelfth of a *dirham* to a huge weight like that of Mount Uḥud (as reward for a good deed), a measure of weight or volume which varies from one era to another; also a dry measure, a weight equal to 0.195 gram

Qirân قِران : Type of Ḥajj where a pilgrim performs both 'Umrah and Ḥajj under one *iḥrâm*

Qiyâm al-Layl قِيَامُ اللَّيل : Mid-night prayer

Qiyâs قِيَاس : Lit. Measure; Compare, correlate, in the fiqh it is analogy, i.e., principle of

		working out new rulings or decisions (according to Islam) on issues faced by the Muslim society
Qunoot	قُنُوت	: Lit. Humility; Devoutness, Islamically it is supplication made by the Muslims in the 2nd unit of *fajr* prayer and/or in the *witr* prayer after *rukoo'* and before *sajdah*
Râ'y	رائ	: Pl. *Âra*; Opinion, personal discretion, a legal decision based on the common sense in the absence of explicit guidance from the Qur'an, Sunnah, *Ijmâ'* and *Qiyâs*
Rak'ah	رَكعَة	: A unit of prayer
Riba	ربا	: Usury, interest
Sâ'	سَاع	: A measure of volume equal to four *mudds*, a *mudd* -- double-handed scoop
Sa'i	سَعي	: An 'Umrah / Ḥajj ritual i.e., walking from Mount Safa to Marwa and back
Ṣâbiroon	صَابِرُون	: Sing. *Ṣâbir*; The patient
Ṣadaqah	صَدَقَة	: Amount paid to the poor or needy also used for Zakah
Ṣaḥâbah	صَحابَة	: Sing. *Ṣaḥâbi*; Companions of the last Prophet Muhammad
Ṣaḥeeḥ	صَحِيح	: Lit. Authentic; In hadith discipline it is used to denote that the narrated hadith is highly reliable
Sakeenah	سَكِينة	: Calmness, tranquility and reassurance
Ṣalah	صَلوة/ صلاة	: Prayer, obligatory/optional

Salâm	سَلام	: A type of greeting used by the Muslims meaning peace
Ṣalât al-Istisqa'	صَلاة الاستسقاء	: Prayer for rain
Saweeq	سَوِيق	: A dish made of wheat or barley also with sugar and dates
Seerah	سِيرَة	: Biography, generally this word is used for the biography of the Prophet and the Companions
Shar'i	شَرعي	: Legal from Islamic point of view
Shari'ah	شَرِيعَة	: Islamic code or law
Shayṭân	شَيطان	: Satan, Devil
Shirk	شِرك	: Polytheism, paganism, associating deities with the Creator
Shoora	شُورى	: A consultation body in the Islamic polity
Ṣiddeeq	صِدِّيق	: Lit. the truthful; A title given to the first caliph Abu Bakr for his loyalty and belief in the Prophet without any shade of doubt
Soorah	سُورة	: Chapter (of the Qur'an)
Ta'jeel	تَعجيل	: Haste
Ta'zeer	تَعزير	: Punishment
Tabi'een	تابِعين	: Sing. *Tabi'ee*; The Followers, the second generation of the early Muslims, the one who didn't see the Prophet and attained Deen from the Companion
Tafseer	تَفسِير	: Interpretation, generally used for the interpretation of the Qur'an
Ṭâghoot	طاغُوت	: Lit. Exceeding limits of creatureliness;

		Qur'anically the first stage of error is *Fisq* — disobeying Allah, 2nd stage is *kufr* - denying/rejecting God, last stage — not only rebelling against God but also imposing his will on others, this last stage is *ṭâghoot*, whoever is worshipped / blindly followed in opposition to the commands of Allah
Takbeer	تكبير	: Lit. Magnification; Saying *Allâhu Akbar*, i.e., Allah is All-Great
Tamattu'	تمتّع	: Type of Ḥajj where a pilgrim performs 'Umrah first and comes out of *Iḥrâm* and puts on *Iḥrâm* for Ḥajj on 8th of Dhu'l Hijjah
Tarâweeḥ	تَرَاويح	: A prayer offered during Ramaḍân after *'Ishâ'* prayer
Tasbeeḥ	تَسبيح	: Lit. Glorifying; Saying *Subḥân-Allâh*
Ṭawâf	طواف	: Circumambulation (going round) of Ka'bah
Tawḥeed	تَوحيد	: Lit. Unification; Islamically it is monotheism — believing that there is only one and alone diety: Allah
Thiqah	ثِقة	: Trustworthy
Thughoor	ثُغور	: Outposts
Tilâwah	تِلاوة	: Recitation
'Uboodiyah	عُبودية	: Lit. Slavery; In Islamic terminology Servitude to Allah alone
Umm walad	أمّ وَلَد	: A concubine who bore her master a child
Ummah	أمّة	: Nation

'Umrah	عُمرة	: Minor pilgrimage to Makkah performed anytime of the year
Uqiyah	اوقِيَة	: A measure of silver equal to forty *dirhams* or 123 gms. of silver
'Ushoor	عُشُور	: Sing. *'Ushr*; One tenth of the yield of land to be levied for public assistance, the tithes paid by merchants
Waba'	وَباء	: An epidemic
Waḥi	وَحي	: Revelation
Wakeel	وَكيل	: Trustee, Disposer of affairs or Guardian
Wali	وَلِي	: Protector, Supporter, Helper
Waqf	وَقف	: Trust, an unalienable endowment for a charitable purpose
Wasq	وَسق	: Pl. *awsâq*; A measure of volume equal to sixty *sâ's*
Wuḍoo'	وُضوء	: Ablution to attain ritual purity for prayer etc.
Zakah	زَكوة / زكاة	: Lit. to grow, to purify/cleans; Islamically it is one of the five pillars of Islam, generally translated as alms and poor due, a wealth tax paid on certain forms of wealth: gold and silver, staple crops, livestock and trading goods, as regards its distribution *Qur'an 9: 60* gives the details
Zakât al-Fiṭr	زكاة الفطر	: An obligatory charity to be paid by every believer for himself and his dependants at the end of Ramaḍân and before 'Eid prayer
Zinâ	زنا	: Fornication, illegal sex, adultery
Zuhd	زُهد	: Asceticism